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Prison Poems
Yuri Daniel

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An Anatomy of Nixonism
Michael Harrington

Toward a Reordered Economy
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Southern Workers and Wallace
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Robert Martinson

Liberal Education and Radical Values
Samuel Hux

With the Miners
H. W. Benson

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The editors of DISSENT are pleased to announce the publication this fall, under the imprint of QUADRANGLE BOOKS, of

The World of the Blue Collar Worker

This collection of twenty essays is taken from the now-famous Blue Collar issue DISSENT *published in Winter 1972.*

Among the contributors are:

Judith Agassi	**Andrew M. Greeley**	**Gus Tyler**
H. W. Benson	**Michael Harrington**	**Myra Wolfgang**
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DISSENT is a journal devoted to radical ideas and the values of socialism and democracy. It seeks to serve as a forum for writers devoted to these ideas and values, while also welcoming a wide variety of other opinions. Each writer speaks for himself; there is no effort made to exact editorial consensus or uniformity.

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FALL 1972

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Yuli Daniel

Prison Poems

Yuli Daniel was born in Moscow in 1925. His novel This is Moscow Speaking *and short stories were published in the West under the pen name of Nikolai Arzhak. He was arrested with Andrei Sinyavsky in September 1965 and in February 1966, in an infamous trial, was sentenced to five years in a corrective labor colony for "slandering the Soviet Union." A chapter of Anatoly Marchenko's* My Testimony *is devoted to Daniel's stay in a strict regime labor camp in Mordovia. He was released in September 1970.*

By the Check Point

We walk past weeping women,
we walk, stepping in silence,
we don't dare say a word to them,
we can not wave our hands to them,
we walk, and on their shoulders—
knapsacks of tobacco and grub,
knapsacks of unspent passion,
knapsacks of old anguish.
How hard it must have been for them
to save up for the tickets kopeck by kopeck,
to make up those parcels bit by bit
for their rowdy soldier men,
and, shedding coins like tears,
to buy cigarettes, then buy some more,
to transport them, carry them here, hoping for luck,
only to hear: "Take them back!"
And we, who have grown used here to speak
of love with savage bluntness,
walk past them quietly, humbly,
without any wisecracks or curses,
because we are not phonies here,
because these tired wives
aren't sluts, easy lays, dumb peasants,
but are called—the sister of the Zeks.

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We walk, simpletons and poets,
having swapped freedom and family,
having swapped the caresses of women
for words, for fantasies, for dreams.
But just what else are we to do
when we are all creating poems out of blood?
That's the kind of husbands you've got—
You probably ought to forgive us. . . .

(Zeks—Russian prison slang for "prisoner.")

To My Friends

God's grace was excessively generous.
I was rich. Not a day would pass
when the heavenly manna of human sympathy
did not fall upon me.

I would hold up my delicate palms,
and smile ironically: "God be praised!"
whenever caravans of visitors came bearing
their priceless gifts of warmth and light.

But only here, far from your distant hands,
your distant eyes, was I able to understand,
that in these three vile and terrible years
only you have saved me from ruin.

No, men do not live by bread alone.
You have helped me win my battles.
You have poured life and blood into my veins,
O my doctors, my donors of blood!

All that's gone. Things go very bad for me.
Once again a restlessness circles above me.
Who will sigh to me: "You crazy guy . . ."
and touch my forehead with a warm hand?

All that's gone. Freedom won't be coming soon
and hope is at best a spark.
But in the silence of my humdrum desolation
you are transformed into sounds and words.

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A Song About My Native Land

My country, say at least one word to me!
Before you my conscience is clear.
Can it really be true that slander
is going to divide us for good?

My dreams knocking stone till they bled,
I came to you through heat and cold,
through you I came to you and as I came
cities dissolved like tears in my eyes.

I harbor no evil designs,
nor any regrets for my fate.
So, my country, say at least one word to me,
for you know I have not lied to you.

You know I didn't throw my love on the scales
and measure out my passion piece by piece—
I loved you so much, my Russia,
more even perhaps than the women I've loved.

So that I won't lament my fate,
so that I won't fall beneath my cross's weight,
give me a sign of your trust, my country—
before you my conscience is clear.

Translated by RICHARD LOURIE

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Irving Howe

Can McGovern Win?

July 30, 1972

Insofar as anyone can, I'll try to answer this question. But first, some analytical remarks about the McGovern movement and the social context in which it arises. For whatever happens in November, it seems clear that a new political force is arising in the United States.

I

THIS NEW POLITICAL FORCE is centered in the Democratic party, though it draws upon a variety of nonparty sources: it expresses a strongly felt desire among millions of people for social reform that will attack some inequities of our society; it employs a populist rhetoric; it is energized by a strong revulsion against the Vietnam war and the whole tradition of military interventionism; and it finds —thus far—its main centers of support among the educated classes, the academics, the professionals, the young.

This new movement has shown itself remarkably efficient at political maneuvering, often beating the old-timers at their own game. It has shown that housewives and graduate students can be as sharp in ward organization as cigar-smoking politicians. And it has shown that volunteers, amateurs, newcomers can do hard and sustained political work.

If nothing else, the mere upsurge and coherence of these energies ought to be regarded, after some years of demoralization, as a victory for the *idea* of democracy. Even those who don't like the McGovern phenomenon ought to see this. Whole new constituencies have been mobilized; previously mute needs have been articulated; people are trying to use the democratic process. Those of us who kept insisting during the 1960s that the way to social change was through plunging into politics, rather than by indulging in corrupt fantasies of "revolutionary" violence, should feel highly gratified. Where the New Left was able to mobilize thousands for demonstrations in Chicago, it was reduced in Miami to a feeble little band parking for a while in the lobby of McGovern's hotel.

This new movement, centered for the time about Senator McGovern but certainly not putting all its hopes on his immediate campaign, could make the Democratic party into a vital force once again—or it could founder on the rocks of righteous sectarianism (in Frank Mankiewicz's wisecrack about the inner politics of the Democratic reformers, "every little meaning has a movement of its own"). It could win the allegiance of masses of black voters, and not merely some black celebrities; it could gradually cement an alliance with the trade unions, still an indispensible force for majoritarian social change. It has enormous possibilities and, for that very reason, faces enormous pitfalls.

Much about the behavior of these people at the Democratic convention was impressive: their persistence, their seriousness during the platform debate, the participation of large numbers of women and blacks. This does not

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mean everything that happened in Miami was happily democratic. I, for one, find the idea of electing delegates by quotas disturbing, even while liking the immediate consequence—the appearance of large numbers of black and women delegates. Nevertheless, from the point of view of the democratic Left as it has been expressed in these pages over the years, the recent events leading to McGovern's nomination give cause for hope.

There remains a central weakness, however, in this new movement: its lack of strong plebeian support and participation. It is a weakness that need not be fatal at this stage of development, for new movements tend first to flourish among persons who enjoy the possibilities of relative leisure and who are inclined toward generalized ideas. But if the McGovern movement fails to gain strong support among the American workers and the lower-middle class, then not only will it not be able to win the election, it will not "deserve" to. Let us remember that the use of the populist label to describe the McGovern movement is imprecise. Populism in America, whatever else it may have been, was a deeply plebeian mass movement. McGovernism is thus far a movement of academics, professionals, young people, and the like who employ a populist rhetoric. There is a difference; indeed, it could make all the difference.

For what is involved here is not merely expediency, not merely the fact that the McGovern movement needs blue-collar votes to win the election. What is involved is the far more important fact that no movement for truly democratic and deep-going social change can thrive, can claim political and social authenticity, unless it finds massive support among the people in whose behalf it proposes to act. Anything else is elitism. The fate of the McGovern movement will be decided by its ability—one hopes, by its success—in stirring underprivileged blacks, unionized workers of all colors, persons of various ethnic backgrounds who live modestly, sometimes even on the edge of poverty. That will be the test. Later in this article, I will go into detail on the vexing problem of the relations between the McGovern movement and the trade unions. But before that, let me try to place the McGovern phenomenon in a social context.

II

WE ARE EXPERIENCING what I propose to call *the second stage of the welfare state in America*. That's a clumsy mouthful of language, but perhaps it's also suggestive.

The first stage of the welfare state—enacted during the 1930s though prepared for during the previous 25 years—had relatively precise ends. It sought to provide rudimentary kinds of protection (social security, unemployment insurance, etc.) against the worst effects of crisis and depression in capitalist society. It helped strengthen the socioeconomic position of certain less-favored segments of the society, especially the workers. The demands acted upon during the Roosevelt administration had been developed over decades, mostly by the labor, socialist, and liberal movements. Once formulated, these demands then required a major social crisis, the Great Depression, to give them an immediate political charge.

I want to suggest that we are entering a similar development right now. Whether, or how, it will reach a satisfactory fulfillment can't be said. But some things are clear: a host, sometimes a chaos, of new desires, yearnings, and demands have recently been thrust upon the American scene. These range from radical schemes for income redistribution to proposals for legalizing marijuana; they reflect a bewildering *but vital* interweaving of group interests, new constituencies.

If nothing else, the theory of historical stasis, that we are in a dead end of stagnation brought about by industrial affluence, has been shown to be utterly false—false in both its conservative and "radical" (Marcuse) versions. People discover new needs, new problems, new goals.

The welfare state shows itself to be essentially *a realm of conflict*—thus far contained within certain limits but, through the persistence and new definitions of these conflicts, also capable of extending its boundaries. Socioeconomic clashes still occur within the framework of a capitalist economy but they help to transform and modulate that economy. Political clashes still occur within the American center, but they help move the center in one or another direction—this time, it would seem, to the Left.

The demands of the first stage of the wel-

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fare state were urgent, elementary, glaring. They concerned the sheer material survival of the working class and unemployed. But the demands of the second stage of the welfare state must *necessarily* be less precise—at least during initial efforts to formulate them. Ideology sometimes comes as a protective smokescreen before the advance of program.

WHAT IS the general content of the demands raised during the second stage of the welfare state? Roughly the following:

• The American "underclass," barely noticed during the first stage, begins to rumble with discontent and demands that its needs be considered as well as those of the organized workers in the unions. "Underclass" may here be a sociological euphemism for the blacks.

Some of the blacks, a growing number of them, are workers, and certain of their socioeconomic needs are taken care of by the unions—but obviously, not all. The struggle for black articulation, with all the historical torment that it carries, can range from "black nationalism" to the quite impressive participation by large numbers of well-organized blacks in the Democratic party.

• Neglected groups, not always discernible through the lens of a simple class analysis, come to a new consciousness. These range from militant women to homosexuals to smaller ethnic groups, like the Chicanos. They learn, from the experience of earlier struggles, how to exert pressure, and it would be both politically foolish and humanly insensitive to dismiss them. If some of them can't yet put their needs into the precise formulas of *an issue,* they can cry out their sense of *a trouble.* At best, the release of troubles leads to the formulation of issues.

• New or newly perceived issues common to the whole society, though often pressing most heavily on the poor, come to the forefront of attention. Some of these issues, like pollution, may be overstated or exploited in behalf of apocalyptic visions. But they are real. Other such issues—notably proposals for tax reform—constitute a first, hesitant step toward *extending and redefining the limits of the welfare state.* Tax reform can be a potent weapon in the movement toward a society which, though not socialist, approaches an egalitarian model far more closely than does American society today.

Some of the social ideas distinctive to the second stage of the welfare state are still in the discussion phase: ideas having to do with democratic control of corporations and a more humane organization of work. But in a little while, we may expect, they will also become issues for public debate and political struggle.

THERE ARE, of course, difficulties. These difficulties have to do with economic interest, social status, political power: they came through vividly enough at the Democratic convention. The beneficiaries of the first stage of the welfare state have an interest—call it a "vested interest," if you wish—in preserving and extending their gains. Nothing whatever is wrong with that. If you engage in a successful struggle, you will have a "vested interest." The groups and movements thrown up during the second stage of the welfare state—groups and movements that have even more difficulty in cohering their ranks and sharpening their ideas than did those of 40 years ago—sometimes tend to look down their noses at the plebeian character of the first stage of the welfare state. Insofar as they do, the result is political self-destructiveness and moral snobbism. But the older groups—the labor people, the traditional liberals—also reveal a good measure of insensitivity and indifference to the authentic yearnings of the newer constituencies. No one has a monopoly on parochialism.

So, tension is bound to follow and some of the conflicts at the Democratic convention were signs of that tension. But it would make things too easy simply to suppose that the differences between, say, the Meany people and the McGovern people are no more than differences of "style." There are also genuine divergences of interest. Some trade unionists believe, unfortunately, that it is to their interest to sustain a high level of war production; some of the new reformers are a little too blithe in their readiness to minimize the immediate consequences for American workers of a sharp reduction in war-producing industry. Some trade unionists—e.g., those in the building trades—feel they have a stake in

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maintaining a tight labor market that keeps the number of black entrants to a minimum; some of the new reformers fail to grasp with any real sympathy the feelings of white workers who are afraid they will be squeezed out of their jobs.

Put in such general terms, the conflict between groups that ought ideally to be partners, and the all-but-complete breakdown of the liberal-labor-ethnic coalition that won the first victories of the New Deal period, can be discussed with some objectivity. But when these clashes are enacted *politically* and positions of power are defended and challenged, passions mount. They have to. But if passions are essential to the cause of radical change in America, they can also be terribly destructive.

III

LET'S TURN to the relations, such as they are, between the union leaders and the new political movement. And let's try to be as objective as we can in order to ask ourselves, why do the top leaders of the AFL–CIO dislike McGovern as much as they do? For what seems to be involved is not merely disagreement but a strong dislike. I offer the following reasons, some obvious and other speculative:

• These union people, who have plenty of political experience, seem honestly to feel that McGovern's political stress is too "far-out," that it will not gain in the election the kind of support it could gain in the primaries, and that disaster will follow. Insofar as this supposition is put forward in good faith, one can agree or disagree with it; yet that hardly explains the acrimony and intensity of feeling.

• Some of McGovern's votes in Congress conflicted with the positions of the AFL–CIO, though it can't be doubted that in the main he had a good liberal record (86 percent on the ADA scorecard). McGovern voted at one point for "right to work" laws, which labor had sharply opposed; he has admitted that he did so for "political" reasons—South Dakota is not exactly strong in unionism and he felt obliged to heed the pressures of his constituency. Well, he was wrong and the labor criticism on this point is valid.

But what follows? For one thing, that McGovern is fallible, likes to win elections, isn't a saint, and can admit mistakes.

Can anyone suppose, however, that it is this vote, or a few others like it, which really fires the hostilities of the Meany leadership? Haven't other politicians with whom the AFL–CIO is friendly also on occasion diverged in their voting from its preferences? Are we to believe that George Meany is prepared to accept the reelection of Nixon simply because McGovern didn't vote "right" on one or another issue?

• There is a strong ideological clash between the views put forward on world politics by Meany and his foreign policy adviser, Jay Lovestone, and the views put forward by the McGovern movement.

The Meany–Lovestone position advances a traditional cold-war kind of anti-Communism; it supports the Vietnam war; it does not oppose the present course of steadily mounting war expenditures. The McGovern movement looks forward to relaxations in world tension, it denies the rightness of the Vietnam war, and it proposes an American foreign policy strongly disinclined toward military interventionism.

To label the views expressed by McGovern as "isolationist" seems to me inaccurate and malicious. No serious person in American politics is really isolationist; the real question is whether a foreign policy much more hesitant about military interventionism than were Kennedy and Johnson is now appropriate.

To be sure, there is a segment of the peace movement, no doubt reflected among some McGovern supporters, that in its justifiable revulsion against the Vietnam war tends to make simplistic proposals for withdrawing American power from, say, the Middle East. And no doubt, there are people near the McGovern campaign who have illusions as to the reformability of Communist societies.

Such illusions are as intellectually sterile as the Meany–Lovestone hard line on Vietnam and military support for reactionary regimes in the name of anti-Communism. But since when, in American politics, do serious people apply down-the-line ideological tests to everyone in or near a political movement?

Precisely because it is a popular manifestation that has stirred the imagination of many

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people, the McGovern movement contains within it many shadings of opinion. Some of them I don't like, just as some of the people to whom I refer don't like my ideological disposition. But these are matters to be worked and, if need be, fought out in political practice —provided, that is, one agrees that we have here a vital, significant new force that speaks for democratic social change.

Nevertheless, the differences as to foreign policy between the AFL–CIO people and the McGovern people are real, and they are not going to be washed away.

• From several accounts one gathers that the union leaders have strong emotional reactions against the kinds of people active in the McGovern campaign. Though themselves hardly monks living by ascetic prescripts, the union leaders take a plebeian "class" view of the young, professional, academic sorts of people who have done such a remarkable organizational job for McGovern.

Some of this feeling seems to me understandable, and a bit of it warranted. There is a touch of righteousness and snobbism among certain New Politics people. But let us also remember that they have shown they aren't mere "playboys" or dilettantes. They are devoted volunteers; it is politically self-defeating simply to brush such people aside.

George Meany may find it hard to think of Shirley McLaine as a political partner; I. W. Abel may feel discomfited by the PhD's swarming around the McGovern camp. But is it politically serious to allow such responses to become central? Given some of the people the union leaders *have* found it possible to cooperate with, they might learn to get along with the many serious and idealistic recruits to the McGovern campaign.

IV

ARE THESE DIFFERENCES INSURMOUNTABLE? I think not, at least in principle. Which is not to deny that people on both sides may behave foolishly.

The bulk of McGovern's domestic program ought surely to be attractive to unionists and workers. Anyone who checks out the AFL–CIO publications over the last few years will find a strong emphasis on tax reform and income redistribution—which, if not precisely the same as that of McGovern, is surely close enough to warrant cooperation. Intelligent spokesmen for labor opinion, such as Gus Tyler of the ILGWU, have been saying for some years now that income redistribution is a key matter—how can they not respond positively to McGovern's program?

As for foreign policy, even these differences can be exaggerated—as they clearly are by the Lovestone and ex-radical ideologists who see enemies only on the Left. McGovern has already strengthened his programmatic commitment to Europe and Israel, and as far as the latter is concerned, we may look forward to steady pressure on him so that not the slightest tincture of ambiguity on his part (or malice on anyone else's) remains possible. Surely, no serious person can believe the nonsense Hubert Humphrey spread in California that, if McGovern were elected, the U.S. would be reduced to "a second-rank power" or our military resources dangerously depleted. Even if, as seems improbable, the complete McGovern proposal for cutting war expenditures were enacted, this country would still have the capability of blowing up the earth several times over.

If, then, the trade union leaders sit on their hands, or sulk, or confine themselves to congressional campaigns, they may hasten a self-fulfilling prophecy—they may contribute to a McGovern defeat and then shake their heads wisely, claiming they told us all along. Out of such "confirmations" disaster must follow. Thousands upon thousands of young people, the very ones who ought to be the allies of the unions, will be embittered, feeling it was Meany's "sabotage" that helped defeat their candidate.

In 1968 the supporters of Humphrey told those of us who had favored Eugene McCarthy that reluctance to vote for Humphrey (no one had to *love* him) would help elect Nixon. They were, as it turned out, right. And anyone who doubts whether "it matters" is invited to cast a long hard look at the Supreme Court—a Court likely to be with us for years to come. Now the pinch is on the other foot. No one asks George Meany to announce that George McGovern is his favorite PhD; the only question is whether the trade unions will have the sense to recognize that, from their own point of view, the strategy they now *seem* to

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be initiating—though one hopes it's only post-convention gripe—is precisely the one they argued against so passionately four years ago.

There are people within, or in the service of, the unions who constantly talk about some unified creature entitled "labor." Labor, they warn us, will do this or not do that. A little honesty is called for. Even if George Meany were screaming his heart out for McGovern, labor would still be sharply divided in regard to the election. Most of the building trade unions and the Teamsters' Union are going to support Nixon: which comes to about 25 percent of the strength of organized unionism. On the other hand, if Meany and his friends decide to sit this one out, there will still be a substantial minority of unions—the UAW, the government employees led by Jerry Wurf, probably a number of others—coming to McGovern's help. Recent primaries showed that McGovern could get a fair proportion of the blue-collar vote even without official union endorsements. What Meany says isn't necessarily what 15 million workers will do en masse.

But there's an opposite error, and for the McGovern strategists a dangerous one. That is to dismiss the leaders of the AFL–CIO as soured old men who don't represent the ranks and to whom no one listens. A bad mistake. As the 1968 election showed, COPE, the political arm of the unions, is remarkably efficient in getting out the blue-collar vote at elections (though not primaries). Surely, if McGovern is to have any chance at all, this crucial vote in the industrial states must be won.

Conciliation is essential.*

V

SO WE COME to the question with which we began: Can McGovern win?

If we assume that the usual elements of prediction employed in analyzing previous elections also hold for this one, McGovern obviously has little chance. To have alienated the Daley machine will not help, no matter what pretense of friendship is announced. Some of the party professionals may decide that regaining control of a shattered party in 1973 is more to their interest than pushing McGovern into the White House. The Jewish vote may no longer prove as overwhelmingly Democratic as it has in the past. All such calculations, familiar to the point of cliché, could still work out, and that of course is what the Republican strategists expect.

But there is the distinct possibility that the usual elements of prediction no longer hold. The country may be ready for the kinds of changes I have called the second stage of the welfare state. A desire for change—orderly but fairly deep—may indeed sweep the country. Much will depend on McGovern's skill at the tremendously hard and delicate task of enlisting traditional constituencies from the New Deal and post-New Deal coalition while continuing to elicit the new and youthful energies he has tapped.

Even if the McGovern ticket goes down to defeat, it may play a valuable role in preparing for a later victory by a new coalition of the liberal-left. Mike Harrington suggests the interesting possibility that just as the 1928 campaign of Al Smith helped bring to political awareness new elements of the urban population and thereby prepared the way for the Roosevelt victory in 1932, so the McGovern campaign could do the same thing for previously dormant or inarticulate segments of the population.

Something, a little bit, will depend in 1972 on the kind of people who read these notes. That there will be aspects of the McGovern campaign and movement we will not like, I take for granted. How else can it be in politics? But here, one feels, is a genuine upsurge of popular and democratic sentiment, a genuine possibility for the kinds of change the country needs. There is life, there is vitality, there is eagerness, there is a desire to right wrongs. McGovern himself seems, on televi-

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* Alexander Barkin, head of COPE, is quoted in the *New York Post*, July 12, 1972, as saying to an old-line Democratic politician: "You so-called responsible leaders of this party seem to think the kids and the kooks and the Bella Abzugs can win you some elections. Well, we're going to let them try to do it for you this year. We're not."

Barkin and his friends may—we hope they will—change their minds when they cool off. Otherwise, one may foresee the following scenario in 1973: Someone comes up to Barkin and says, "Hey, Alex, how come you have no nose?" And Barkin replies cheerfully, "Yeah, but I've spited my face."

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sion, a man of some reflectiveness, decency, and ease.

The odds, no doubt, are still against McGovern. But if anything in American politics is worth a try, now, in 1972, this is it. □

Postscript *August 20, 1972*

THE TWO WEEKS between the writing of the above comments and my reading of the proofs have not been a happy time for the McGovern movement. George Meany has taken the "no support" position one feared he might; some Democratic politicians have indicated, not so subtly, an intention to sit out the campaign; and there has been the damaging Eagleton incident, which speaks well neither for McGovern's staff work nor the "human sense" of his advisers. Right now, in mid-August, the outlook is rather bleak. But there is a campaign ahead, with many possibilities of surprise and reversal. Much will depend on McGovern's ability to project both proposed social change and personal reassurance.

One good sign is that a number of large and by-no-means-leftist unions—both the electrical workers' unions, the ILGWU, and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers—have endorsed McGovern. Others are expected to. This means that the labor movement is split three ways, with strong minorities pledged to both Nixon and McGovern, and the remainder either sitting it out with Meany or undecided. It therefore makes no sense anymore to speak of "labor's response" to the election, as the Meany spokesmen continue to do; there are now several labor responses. The official AFL–CIO position—truculent, without much effort at public explanation—will do labor no good regardless of who wins the election.

The real campaign is not yet underway, as this is written, but one hopes that the McGovern people will be more thorough than in the past about presenting serious and thought-out positions on the major issues. An ideological campaign would be a disaster, but so would a campaign that failed to consider in depth the major issues. The whole point of the McGovern campaign, indeed the only point, is that it come out with a forthright stand for significant social reform. □

Robert Martinson

Crime and the Election

It should by now be clear that the fear of crime is a political fact and not merely a code word for racism or backlash to the social turbulence of the 1960s.

Beginning with Goldwater in 1964, the hardliners have chosen and defined the issue. The Nixon administration claims some success in its "war on crime." It has emphasized law enforcement, building of new prisons, expanded use of wire-tapping against organized crime, military forays that mainly drive up the price of heroin (Operation Intercept), and evidence of "political" use of Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) funds in eight "high-impact" cities with an eye on the coming election. This approach has been rounded out with a spate of show trials against political dissidents and (except for alcoholism) a stubborn refusal to budge on the issue of so-called victimless crimes.

The delegates at the recent Democratic convention had to listen to Governor Wallace's formulations ("get the thugs off the streets") but showed little inclination to face the problem squarely with a rational alternative. Except for very minor innovations (reduction of penalties for marijuana, but not legalization), the whole crime issue is apparently to be played down by the Democrats. This leaves the field to the Republicans who can be expected to make the most of it.

There was little evidence among the Democrats of the rhetorical excess of the New Left: that Rockefeller is a "murderer"; that all guards are brutal racists; that criminal justice is a conspiracy to enforce conformity on blacks and Puerto Ricans; etc. This rhetoric simply enrages the victims among all races and economic conditions, giving birth to a very tough counterrhetoric recently displayed, for example, by Roy Wilkins of the NAACP.

The difficulties of arriving at a long-run perspective to confront the hardliners should not be understimated. A focus on abortion,

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marijuana, etc. may alienate the middle-American and labor element; a focus on law enforcement stirs liberal fears of a police state; a focus on crime prevention reminds many of the confusion and failures of the war on poverty; a focus on radical reform of criminal justice disquiets those who still maintain faith in the myth of correctional treatment; a focus on "justice for the offender" enrages police and correctional officers' unions and wins no votes among the victimized.

LET US CONSIDER the new *context* of the politics of crime in the last quarter of the 20th century and then turn to a brief critique of current "solutions" from the standpoint of the victim or potential victim.

First, it is not clear how the fear of crime can be "normalized" (say, like the fear of auto accidents), if we continue to have an increasing crime rate. Behavior brought within the scope of the penal codes doubled (perhaps tripled) during the 19th century, giving birth to the "twin phenomena of growing affluence and growing criminality." This growth can no longer be explained away by reference to the "dark figures" of unreported or undetected crime. As James Vorenberg has noted,

> The figures for the last five years of the sixties have convinced all but the most skeptical that something more ominous than population changes or reporting errors is involved. By 1970 the rate of crimes against property had increased 147 percent and the rate of crimes of violence had increased 126 percent.

Is the dangerous leap in public disquiet—sometimes leading to bursts of neighborhood neovigilantism—primarily the result of a given *generation* experiencing such epidemic increases? After five years of the "war on crime," even Attorney General Kleindienst can only argue that crime is being "decelerated" under the Republicans. "From a 17% rise in 1968, the annual increase was slowed to only [!] 6% in 1971."

If crime rates were to decelerate and level off, I would still argue that there has been a secular shift in the characteristics of the offender-victim relationship from poor vs. wealthy in the 19th to underclass vs. blue collar and middle class in the 20th century. This has given birth to an increase in *expectations* for protection of hard-earned gains. Organized in trade unions, small business associations, citizens' lobbies and local political groups, the new victim does not have a psychology of dumb acquiescence to fate. He wants the institutions of criminal justice to serve the middle and not merely the well-to-do. If this new demand is not met, cities will be further torn by struggles over the allocation of fixed resources to the detriment of the ghettos and high-crime areas.

Finally, there has been a critical transformation in the mood and psychology of the increasing streams of black and minority-group persons processed through the machinery of criminal justice. Convict culture used to combine sentimental chauvinism with a free-born hatred of the lunch bucket; organized and politicized resistance has begun to create an unprecedented crisis in criminal justice. Attica, for example, seemed to be a new form of collective disturbance, as much a revolt against "prison reform" as a demand for it.

Increasing crime; the politicized offender; the enraged victim—something has to give in this gloomy picture. Efforts are increasingly focused on the agencies of criminal justice, especially the prison. The opportunity to build a movement to transform these institutions was (ironically enough) advanced through the passage of the Safe Streets and Crime Control Act in 1968—that first bitter fruit of hard-line fear of crime. Crime-control planning on the state level was introduced through block-grant funding. James Vorenberg charges that "there is little to show for the almost $1 billion that has been spent." He blames "militant police and correctional officers' unions" and lack of a "push for reform" from the federal level. Clearly, one aspect of the politics of crime will be a struggle to wrest these LEAA agencies (and the billions they dispense) from the "old-line representatives of the state and local police departments, courts, prosecutors, and correctional agencies that need to be changed."

For a century the central effort of the forces of reform has been the improvement of the brutal prison regimes with the hope of using them finally to rehabilitate the offender. Evidence is accumulating that the system (courts, probation, prison, parole) may punish, con-

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trol, or incarcerate but that it *cannot* rehabilitate. The primary reason for this is not lack of money or good will. The central paradox can be phrased as follows: *"deprivation of liberty is increasingly damaging in a society which fails to provide democratic opportunity, and yet demands skillful and uncoerced effort from its citizens."* * The correctional systems have become less repressive over time but there has been an increase in the inadvertent *damage* done to offenders through their removal from society at critical junctures of the "life cycle." One result is rampant recidivism and a tremendous increase in criminal-career costs. In this sense, the editors of *Life* were correct when they recently charged that "the machinery of restraining crime [has become] an incubator of it."

There is no space to spell out the specific reforms that follow from this perspective. One must chip away simultaneously at a number of points. The recently founded National Prisoners Coalition presented a convict version by coming out for a "nonviolent approach to the systematic reduction of prison populations." Programs that minimize deprivation of liberty—work release, halfway houses, expanded probation, early release, pretrial vocational programs—are more likely to be consistent with such a nonviolent approach than programs that enrich the prison systems, such as vocational training, more psychiatrists, etc. Change mechanisms, such as probation subsidy (paying counties *not* to send offenders to prisons), reversing the burden of proof at parole hearings, speedy-trial legislation, and prohibition of imprisonment for certain classes of property offenders are immediate measures to implement the strategy.

It would be much too optimistic to suppose that these views on the prison system won't cause still further disputes among people in the liberal, labor, and Left communities.

BUT THE NIXON ALTERNATIVE is clear enough: more and better prisons, enriched with more and better programs. Ironically, as the reform movement has begun to recognize the futility of "correctional treatment," the faltering torch is seized by the hard-liners. The President has joined Ramsey Clark in denouncing the prisons as "universities of crime," not with a view to dismantling them but to enriching them with more "program" since the "protection of the public depends primarily on the correction of the offender." Thus, the century-old program of rehabilitation has now become the last line of defense of the prison system. Attorney General Kleindienst has even announced that the "Bureau of Prisons has launched the largest construction program in its history."

Let us briefly examine—from the standpoint of the victim—four major "solutions" currently advocated:

- *Decriminalization* asks the public to tolerate more deviant behavior and cease using the law to enforce moral conformity. Since there is lack of consensus on such issues as abortion, sexual behavior, marijuana, vagrancy, public drunkenness, prostitution, obscenity, and so forth, this policy simply removes the behavior from the penal codes or reduces penalties. This "solution" is especially appealing to persons who live in high-rise apartment buildings or well-to-do suburbs.

- The *political* problem is to make it palatable to those required to tolerate such behavior—urban dwellers, ghetto inhabitants, small business people. One central way to accomplish this is to reallocate the savings produced by lower police costs to provide concrete and visible protection against the most feared crimes—robbery, burglary, purse snatching, rape by stranger, mugging.

- Modest progress can be made through increasing the *operational efficiency* of existing agencies, especially the police. However, the potential victim in precinct A will not support a policy that merely chases the crime from precinct B into his backyard. If social-planning agencies accumulate more knowledge, they can learn how to maximize the police dollar to effectuate a *general* lessening of crime and not simply its displacement from areas of high political power to those with less. In the absence of knowledge, technological gimmickry and bureaucratic log-rolling will continue with little gain to the public.

* See, Robert Martinson, "The Paradox of Prison Reform," *New Republic*, April 1, 8, 15, and 29, 1972, for a fuller statement.

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• A new strategy of *diversion* ("divert" offenders from confinement to community supervision) is quickly becoming the new orthodoxy among correctional insiders. This policy advocates bail reform, work release, increased probation, local supervision—devices that curb input pressures and reduce the contact between offender and "correctional" system. Assuming that confinement is always more damaging than probation or parole, long-term criminal-career costs will be reduced. But the political problem is to convince the potential victim to trade off a short-term increase in risk for a less criminalistic society in the long run.

• *Democratic crime prevention* fell into disrepute during the period of "maximum participation of the poor." Programs such as Mobilization for Youth promised (but failed) to provide information testing "opportunity" theory—the idea that real expansions of economic opportunity will reduce crime. If it is the lack of social opportunity in an affluent society rather than the brutality of prison that is responsible for soaring crime rates, crime prevention *is* the core of a solution. By removing offenders from society, the prison damages their capacity to take advantage of opportunities even if they were provided. With a change in administration, crime prevention may become something more than a slogan.

TO COMBINE "organizational intelligence" and public disquiet in order to produce substantial change in criminal justice systems is a political problem. Many of the elements for change are present—concern over Attica, a growing determination to shut down prisons (San Quentin, juvenile institutions in Massachusetts), the existence of new state planning agencies dispensing billions, increasing judicial intervention to limit bureaucratic discretion and enforce convict rights, and the disintegration of the myth of the effectiveness of treatment.

All the elements for change are present except the acquiescence or cooperation of the victim and potential victim. This will become the central problem of the politics of crime in the 20th century. A failure to face it squarely, however, could contribute to conservative victories. □

Paul Goodman

1911–1972

Poet, thinker, comrade, friend

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Michael Harrington

Anatomy of Nixonism

Or the Miracle Kissinger Wrought

The old Nixon and the new Nixon are one and the same man: the president of the United States. That is at least one secret of Nixonism.

For, alas, it is now necessary to name an ism after a man whose identity, after 25 years of public life, still seems to be nothing more than a succession of wooden poses. Were there any justice to history one could simply excoriate this second-rater who, by a series of accidents, finally insinuated himself into the presidency. But history is, of course, unfair and one must therefore confront both Nixon and his Administration as complex and important phenomena. This upwardly mobile high school debater, this designer of Graustarkian uniforms for White House guards, has to be taken seriously.

And hardest of all to believe, Richard Nixon has been true to himself. The old Nixon, the red-baiting free entrepreneur of the forties, accompanied the new Nixon, the president of the seventies, to toast Chou En-lai and to proclaim a wage-price freeze. The key to this controlled schizophrenia, and to the ism it incarnates, is provided by the subtitle to Henry Kissinger's book *A World Restored: The Politics of Conservatism in a Revolutionary Age*. Nixon was, and is, a conservative. He fraternizes with Communists and engages in post-Keynesian economic policies as the best, the only way to defend the status quo in a time of tumultuous change. Kissinger persuaded him to be a Metternichian, subordinating his most cherished convictions to the imperatives of international equilibrium; Daniel Patrick Moynihan, less successfully, convinced him, for a while at least, to emulate Disraeli and "Tory socialism." In both cases the underlying motive was the same: to further the politics of conservatism in a revolutionary age.

My central point here is not the wiliness of Henry Kissinger, Pat Moynihan, or even Richard Nixon. Nixonism, as the articulation of social tendencies much more profound than any of its individual spokesmen, is a sophisticated, conservative ideology of late capitalism.

Late capitalism is a corporate collectivism which, particularly under Republicans, must pretend to be individualistic and bourgeois. This deception is necessary not merely because a majority of the electorate would hardly agree to a straightforward socialization of the economy in behalf of the rich. There are other reasons as well: the sentimentality of the Republican rank and file; the sincere ignorance of the leaders who, like the spokesmen for every ruling class, believe in their own ideology and are more functionally deluded than cynical. Richard Nixon did not, of course, invent this system. But the "dialectical unity" of his old and

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new selves is marvelously suited to its needs. His obvious devotion to the Protestant ethic qualifies him uniquely to be the pallbearer of that ethic; his virulent anti-Communism gives him a political license to toast Mao, as William Buckley put it so bitterly, in terms more appropriate to Florence Nightingale. Nixonism is a carefully schizophrenic strategy, appropriate to a man who once wrote that he never lost his temper—except deliberately.

I

These anomalies are most obvious in the area of foreign policy. Indeed, Nixon's conversion to Nixonism in this area is relatively recent, dating from the beginning of his relationship with Henry Kissinger.

Six Crises was written after Nixon's defeat in 1960 and published in 1962. Looking back on his "kitchen debate" with Khrushchev, he remembered:

> It had been a long tense day and I would have welcomed the chance to relax and enjoy some of the sense of accomplishment which comes from a degree of success after so many hard months of preparation. But one thing I had learned through my years of conflict with Communism, going clear back to the Hiss case, is that there is never a period when it is safe to let up in the battle with our Communist opponents. They are out to win, and one of the tactics they use is to keep the pressure on. They try to wear us out. To keep them from winning and to win ourselves, we must have more stamina and more determination than they have.

The entire book is filled with such statements, and its hero is John Foster Dulles, that Manichaean theologian of the Cold War.

Even a famous article written by Nixon in 1967—"Asia After Vietnam," published in *Foreign Affairs* in October of that year—offers no real hint of his impending rapprochement with Mao and visit to Moscow. Because of one sentence, it has often been cited as a signal of policies to come: "Taking the long view, we simply cannot afford to leave China forever outside the family of nations, there to nurture its fantasies, cherish its hates and threaten its neighbors." But this vague piety must be put into Nixon's 1967 context. "Red China . . .," he wrote in the same article, "does [threaten Asian nations] and its threat is clear, present, and repeatedly and insistently expressed." The breakup of the Communist monolith, Nixon continues, does not change this reality: "National communism poses a different kind of threat than did the old-style international communism, but by being subtler it is in some ways more dangerous."

Most explicit of all, "Any American policy toward Asia must come urgently to grips with the reality of China. This does not mean, as many would simplistically have it, rushing to grant recognition to Peking, to admit it to the United Nations and to ply it with offers of trade—all of which would serve to confirm its rulers in their present course." "The world," Nixon concluded, "cannot be safe until China changes." We must persuade China that it *must* change.

The *Foreign Affairs* article did provide one major portent of the Nixon to come. The war in Vietnam, candidate Nixon wrote, had taught the United States that it must not engage in unilateral interventions. This was a fairly clear harbinger of the "Nixon Doctrine" with its lowered American profile and its insistence that Asians die on their "own" behalf. Yet the mood of the piece is one in which Mao leads a nation called "Red China," not as President Nixon was beginning to say, "the People's Republic of China." The new Nixon in foreign affairs—at least in the dramatic persona of the voyager to Peking and Moscow—required, at the least, the coaching of Henry Kissinger.

KISSINGER'S WRITINGS offer the most important clue to the strategy of Nixonism. In *A World Restored* Kissinger writes about the peace of Europe created after the turmoil of the French Revolution and after Napoleon had upset all the traditional supports of legitimacy and stability. Two por-

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traits might even contain intimations of Richard Nixon. His contemporaries, Kissinger writes,

> did not understand that it was an accident of history which projected Metternich into a revolutionary struggle so foreign to his temperament. For like the century that formed him, his style was adapted better to the manipulation of factors treated as given than to a contest of will, better to achievement through proportion than through scale. He was a Rococo figure, complex, finely carved, all surface, like an intricately cut prism. His face was delicate but without depth, his conversation brilliant but without ultimate seriousness.

And of the British conservative Castlereagh he writes: "Few individuals have left behind them such a paucity of personal reminiscences. Icy and reserved, Castlereagh walked his solitary path, as humanely unapproachable as his policy came to be incomprehensible to the majority of his countrymen. It was said of him that he was like a splendid summit of polished frost. . . ."

What is remarkable about Kissinger's book is not that one finds in it occasional phrases that apply to Nixon, but rather that it presents a clear rationale for the current detente with China and Russia. I quote extensively because this account of nineteenth-century politics can be taken as an objective anticipation of what Nixon is now doing.

Kissinger writes of the Congress of Vienna:

> There are two ways of constructing an international order: by will or by renunciation; by conquest or legitimacy. For twenty-five years Europe had been convulsed by an effort to achieve order through power [the French Revolution and Napoleon], and to contemporaries the lesson was not its failure but its near success. . . . The statesmen at Vienna were not interested in transforming humanity, because in their eyes this effort had led to the tragedy of a quarter-century of struggle. To transform humanity by an act of will, to transcend French nationalism in the name of that of Germany, would have seemed to them to make peace by revolution, to seek stability in the unknown, to admit that a myth once shattered cannot be regained.
>
> The issue at Vienna, then, was not reform against reaction—this is the interpretation of posterity. Instead, the problem was to create an order in which change could be brought about through a sense of obligation, instead of through an assertion of power. For the difference between a revolutionary order and a *healthy* legitimate one is not the possibility of change, but the mode of its accomplishment. . . . The health of a social structure is its ability to translate transformation into acceptance, to relate the forces of change to those of conservation.

"Whatever one may think of the moral content of their solution," Kissinger says of the leaders at Vienna,

> it excluded no major power from the European concert and therefore testified to the absence of unbridgeable schisms. The settlement did not rest on mere good faith, which would have put too great a strain on self-limitation; nor on the efficacy of a pure evaluation of power, which would have made calculation too indeterminate. Rather there was created a structure in which the forces were sufficiently balanced, so that self-restraint could appear as something more than self-abnegation, but which took account of the historical claims of its components, so that its existence could be translated into acceptance.

Ideology, in short, had to be put aside. British statesmen, Kissinger remarks, preferred some domestic structures to others, "but their preference was based on the greater likelihood that these governments would maintain the European equilibrium."

At one point, Kissinger raises his historical analysis to the level of philosophy and his comments are as relevant to the domestic Nixon as they are to the international one. During a revolutionary period, Kissinger argues, political life loses its spontaneity because the existing patterns of obligation have been challenged. This puts the conservative in a strange position:

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> His fundamental position involves a denial of the validity of questions regarding authority; but the questions, by exacting a reply, have demonstrated a kind of validity. . . . For what does it profit a conservative to emerge victorious in a battle of wills? His battle is not personal but social, his justification not individual but historical. It is no accident that in revolutionary contests the conservative position comes to be dominated by its reactionary—that is, counterrevolutionary—wing, the group which fights in terms of will and with an ethic of loyalty. For the true conservative is not at home in social struggle. He will attempt to avoid unbridgeable schisms, because he knows that a stable social structure thrives not on triumphs but on reconciliations.

This dilemma leads to two counterposed conservative strategies. The Burkean regards revolution as "an offense against social morality, the violation of the sacred contract of a nation's historic constitution," and there can therefore be no practical coming to terms with the phenomenon. The Metternichian, on the other hand, fought against the revolution "not because it was immoral, but because it was disastrous." This rationalist and even pragmatic approach legitimizes deals with and concessions to a revolutionary power so long as these will work toward the "restoration" of the world, i.e., stability and harmony.

Kissinger's analysis paralleled Nixon's 1967 thesis that the United States could no longer play the role of policeman of the globe, but it also went far beyond that new commonplace of our politics. It provided President Nixon with a *conservative* rationale for breaking bread with Mao and Chou. John Foster Dulles, the old Nixon hero and himself a Burkean, would not even shake hands with Chou at Geneva in 1964, since he saw the Chinese leader as the very incarnation of social evil; Richard Nixon, the new Metternichian, could go far beyond shaking hands precisely because he thought that conciliation would forward conservative purposes.

Here is the President in a January 1972 interview:

> We must remember that the only time in the history of the world that we have had any extended periods of peace is when there has been a balance of power. It is when one nation becomes infinitely more powerful in relation to its potential competitor that the danger of war arises. So I believe in a world in which the United States is powerful. I think it would be a safer world and a better world if we have a strong, healthy United States, Europe, Soviet Union, China and Japan, each balancing the other, not playing one against the other, an even balance.

Note that Alger Hiss's old adversary is here advocating a strong Soviet Union and China as a means of promoting . . . the security of the United States.

It was this philosophy that provided the basis for the agreement on strategic arms limitation signed by Nixon during his Moscow visit. The United States consciously allowed the Soviet Union to reach parity on the grounds that such an equality would then decrease the danger of nuclear war. For it is dangerous even for one's own country to be "infinitely more powerful in relation to its potential competitor" and a significant American advantage over the Soviet Union in nuclear weaponry therefore comes to be undesirable from an American point of view. (Reality, as we shall see, is not quite as neat as these theories of international gamesmanship would suggest. The American military establishment, speaking through Defense Secretary Laird, announced in the summer of 1972 that it would accept the Moscow accords only if they were taken as justification for a major escalation of the offensive arms race. The Joint Chiefs seem not to have read Metternich.)

Nixonism in foreign affairs, then, is based on a sophisticated amoral analysis of the realities of world power. Just as the President abandons Adam Smithian premises in domestic politics in order to preserve the capitalist essence, so internationally he for-

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goes the consolations of Dulles theology to make a deal with the Communists that he believes will make his kind of anti-Communism more secure. In each case there is a continuity of conservative purpose (the old Nixon lives) and a somewhat radical departure in tactics (the new Nixon also lives).

There is no question that Nixon's new rationalism is superior to his previous Manicheanism. It is infinitely preferable to Dulles's conviction that massive retaliation could somehow defend, or even liberate, people under Communism by unleashing a nuclear war. It is conservative, not reactionary, seeking to shore up the old order by shrewd concessions to its enemies rather than through righteous violence. Nixon's twentieth-century Metternichianism has led to a de facto recognition of Communist China and to the Moscow agreements on arms limitations, two quite desirable events. So it is necessary to say that, in these matters at least, Nixonism has been better than anyone had thought in 1968 Nixon would be.

YET, EVEN while greeting the positive in Nixon's foreign policy, one must criticize its basic assumptions. Not, to borrow from Kissinger's Metternich, that it is immoral but that in the long run it will prove disastrous.

First, there is the theory that the world of the late twentieth century can be manipulated like nineteenth-century Europe. This is simply not true. The difficulty is not merely geographical and demographic, although these factors contribute to the profound difference between Nixon's world and Metternich's. More to the point, there is today a potential for instability that makes of planetary balance a most precarious strategy. On the one hand, we have internal uncertainties in countries that are supposed to follow a rationalistic policy of sophisticated self-interest. China, to take one example, could be wracked by a succession crisis after Mao's death. Only a few years ago, after all, it was the "Cultural Revolutionaries" and Red Guards who seemed to have the upper hand. And in Japan, to be less speculative, Nixon's trip to Peking—or, more precisely, the secret way in which it was negotiated—helped to topple the political leader of a superpower.

At the same time, the technology of destruction is much more tippable than it was a hundred years ago. Nuclear weapons systems allow only one "mistake" this side of holocaust. In the United States—after we have just learned that a four-star general carried out his personal Vietnam bombing policy (or was it the private policy of insubordinate Joint Chiefs?)—that should be a sobering consideration. And Secretary Laird's campaign for an escalation of weapons systems after the Moscow Pact, his urge to unbalance the American-Soviet nuclear relationship as best he can, is an indication that Mr. Nixon's new sophistication is not entirely shared by all men in power.

Second, the President's *Realpolitik* is predicated on ignoring, or suppressing, the rights of the less powerful nations. In the case of Bangladesh, insane notions of strategic realism led Washington to side with the West Pakistanis. That was particularly obscene when one considers that, while justifying the bloodbath in Vietnam on the ground that we are fighting for the principle of free elections, we simultaneously and in part surreptitiously were aiding the Pakistanis in their attempt to wipe out a freely elected government in Bangladesh. Not only was this policy outrageous; it was also a demonstration of how the instabilities of the Third World can intrude upon the arrangements of the big powers. During the period of Metternichian balance, the "natives" could be dealt with by a gunboat or two and the dominant powers had only to refrain from slaughtering one another. That is no longer the case.

Third, Nixon is dedicated to perpetuating the very injustices in the Third World that will promote the instabilities threatening his grand design. "Have no illusions," he told Richard Wilson, editor of his public papers,

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"it's a new game, economic competition among the world's five great superpowers." In his August 1971 speech announcing the wage-price freeze, the President was philosophic about this point: "A nation, like a person, has to have a certain inner drive in order to succeed. In economic affairs that drive is called the competitive spirit." Thus the global economic vision of Nixonism is much more classically capitalist than his domestic perspective, not the least because there are no international equivalents of the American labor, liberal, and socialist movements capable of imposing that modicum of humanity upon the world market which they have imposed on the welfare state.

In his August 1971 speech, the President also said that "the time has come for exchange rates to be set straight and for the major nations to compete as equals." He completely ignored, however, the "unequal nations," i.e., the majority of the peoples of the world. They suffer from an international division of labor established in the heyday of capitalist hegemony that transfers wealth from the starving to the fat. Since World War II, for instance, the prices paid for the industrial goods of the rich nations have gone up, while those for the agricultural products and raw materials of the poor countries have gone down. Where the multinational corporations do invest in the Third World (during recent decades they have been more interested, Lenin notwithstanding, in profiteering from affluence than from poverty), they tend to make enclaves that make balanced development still more difficult.

As Luis Echeverría the president of Mexico, made quite clear in his visit to the United States in 1972, even the best-off of the developing countries, like his own, find it difficult to achieve economic independence in the face of the massive power of American capital. Echeverría, a reformist committed to social capitalism, argued that if this situation persisted, nationalist dictatorships would emerge throughout Latin America. It is, he said, in the long-run interest of American business to allow, and even encourage, economic development. But for all his new sophistication, Nixon is deeply committed to the disastrous old values in this area.

Very early in his Administration, in April 1969, the President declared himself: "We must enlist the energies of private enterprise, here and abroad, in the cause of economic development. We must do so by stimulating investment through businesslike channels rather than offering ringing exhortations." This is a kind of international analogue to the domestic strategy of having the state plan for, and subsidize, the private sector. It provides a world perspective for that corporate collectivism which is at the center of Nixonism and is likely to cause more turbulence in the poor countries than will their Communist parties. When the pre-Allende foreign minister of Chile explained to Nixon in 1969 that American capital takes more money out of Latin America than American aid puts in, the President responded with a promise to send . . . more American capital. It was, *Le Monde* commented, a dialogue of the deaf.

Even this seemingly Manchesterian faith in the efficacy of the world market is quite ambiguous, as much new Nixon as old. The President took unilateral protectionist measures on August 15, 1971, and John Connolly, his then secretary of the treasury, followed up with some of the most unabashed tough-talking heard recently in international financial circles. The power of the American government is, in short, to be used internationally as well as domestically to subsidize the American corporation. In the competition among equals advocated by Nixon, he intends to see to it that American business is more equal than anyone else. One of the main goals of the President's Technology Opportunities Program (about which more later) is to socialize the research that will make private companies more competitive—and more profitable—on the world market.

This state-planned and subsidized "free enterprise" is objectionable on many

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grounds. One of them is that by using the resources of the United States to reinforce and intensify the injustices of the world economy—particularly the injustices imposed upon the Third World—Nixonism will exacerbate the troubles of the majority of mankind. At the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Santiago de Chile in 1972, the spokesmen of the globe's poor once more announced to the affluent powers that their desperate demands—prayers would be a more accurate word—had again not been met. Since no anti-imperialist movement had come to power for all of a year this *cri de coeur* was, as usual, ignored. Yet, by provoking even more insurgencies throughout the globe, precisely this economic "realism" on the world market could tip the balance Richard Nixon is so carefully constructing.

Fourth, there is a shrewd perception in international Nixonism that the authoritarian Left should take to heart. Nixon obviously understands—and said publicly as early as his *Foreign Affairs* article in 1967—that the Soviet Union has become a conservative and imperial power. For those who still see Russia as the living heritage of the October Revolution, that is a shocking notion; for those who realize it is a new class society, anticapitalist *and* antisocialist, it is not. Nixon has his own version of the theory of the "convergence" of the two systems: as status quo powers, whatever their profound differences on internal social and economic organization, they have a common stake in maintaining order. It was entirely Metternichian on the part of the Russians to receive their American guest even as he was mining the harbors of their North Vietnamese allies and threatening their own ships. After all, did not the British and the Russians in the nineteenth century subordinate the considerable differences between bourgeois democracy and Czarist autocracy?

Fifth, as regards Vietnam, it is not necessary to speculate on the difficulties in Nixon's balance-of-power politics. The present and immediate past are devastating enough.

Vietnam was supposed to follow Nixon's general scenario. In accordance with the Nixon Doctrine announced at Guam in 1969, America would lower its profile and the South Vietnamese would take over the burden of heavy casualties through "Vietnamization." Only, Nixon systematically underestimated the political factors. Like all American administrations since Harry Truman began in 1950 to finance French imperialism in Indochina, the President thought money and hardware could create a government out of military men who had fought for the French in a struggle against a national liberation movement that literally had been pushed into Communist leadership. Nixon failed. Reactionary anti-Communism was not, is not, and cannot be a bulwark against national Communism.

In April 1970, during the invasion of Cambodia, Nixon, betting on a highly calculated scheme to achieve a conservative peace, became hysterical. He addressed the nation on April 30:

> My fellow Americans, we live in an age of anarchy both abroad and at home. We see mindless attacks on all the great institutions which have been created by free civilizations in the last 500 years. Even here in the United States, great universities are being systematically destroyed. Small nations all over the world find themselves under attack from within and from without.
>
> If, when the chips are down, the world's most powerful nation, the United States of America, acts like a pitiful, helpless giant, the forces of totalitarianism and anarchy will threaten free nations and free institutions throughout the world. It is not our power but our will and character that is being tested tonight. The question all Americans must ask is this: does the richest and strongest nation in the history of the world have the character to meet a direct challenge by a group which rejects every effort to win a just peace, ignores our warnings, tramples on solemn agreements, violates the

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neutrality of an unarmed people and uses our prisoners as hostages?

There are many things that can be said about this outburst—the great universities being "systematically destroyed" are alive and fairly well; the indictment of the North Vietnamese could, except for the point about the prisoners, be better applied to the United States; and so on—but one aspect of it is especially pertinent here. If the domestic American response to an adventure that was not only criminal and foolish, but did not even work, can provoke a Metternichian president to such a tantrum, does that not subvert the whole notion of a calculated balance of power?

In saying this I do not exclude the possibility that Nixon will "win" in Indochina. It is possible that, with the connivance of the Russians and the Chinese and the use of indiscriminate air power, the United States will so wound the North Vietnamese and their Southern allies that a government supported by Washington may linger in Saigon for a few years. That, I take it, is what leaving Vietnam with "honor" means—and it is a goal to which Nixon has already sacrificed almost 20,000 American lives, many more Vietnamese lives, and for which he has carried on a savage bombing campaign. I favor unilateral American withdrawal now, but I am not of that romantic school which holds that Communist flesh and blood must prevail against American jets.

But even if America does defend its grizzly "honor" in this case, my point still holds. The miscalculations of three administrations in Indochina; the failure to reckon with the Third World's fury against ancient injustices; the temperamental behavior of the man who has the ability to blow up a good portion of the civilized globe; these and other factors do not make one optimistic about the possibility of reviving Metternich in the late twentieth century. Those who do not understand the past, Santayana said, are fated to repeat it in the present; to this we might add that those who repeat the past are fated not to understand the present.

INTERNATIONALLY, then, Nixonism has a profoundly conservative, shrewd yet utterly flawed approach. It seeks a Metternichian arrangement among the superpowers, capitalist and Communist, according to which change would be relegated to controllable channels. In pursuit of this goal it is, unlike the moralistic policy of Dulles, willing to strengthen the power of its enemies if only they will accept the model of a global equilibrium. Nixonism is rhetorically dedicated to the virtues of the global division of labor but actually committed to utilizing America's state power to socialize the enormous advantage of our corporations on the world market. It thereby becomes an outlook unwittingly encouraging the very instability it is designed to control.

Capitalist collectivism, in other words, wants to make a deal with bureaucratic collectivism to preserve the status quo. That is not surprising.

II

Domestically, Nixonism is more complicated than in international affairs. In questions of foreign policy Americans usually rally behind their president—except when, as in the case of Lyndon Johnson and Vietnam, his leadership is a clear failure; he therefore has considerable room for maneuver. In internal politics the chief executive is the focus of a myriad pressures since every citizen has strong opinions about work, prices, housing, and the like. Yet in this area one can discern the features of Nixonism even more clearly than in its global manifestations. For here it is immediately tied into the structure of late capitalist society.

This is not to say that the old Nixon has been completely subsumed under the new Nixon. Indeed it is precisely the gross, vulgar persistence of the old Nixon in domestic politics that, by way of dramatic contrast, makes the new Nixon more visible.

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Consider just a few of the President's exercises in old-fashioned, unambiguous reaction. There were the nominations of Clement F. Haynsworth, Jr. and G. Harrold Carswell to the Supreme Court. There was the disastrous economic policy of the Administration's first year or so, which, by attempting to trade off higher unemployment for price stability, pushed a million Americans back into poverty. There were the numerous betrayals of civil rights: the "Southern strategy" and the influence in the White House it brought to a racist like Strom Thurmond; the acceptance of de facto segregation in every area of American life and the fraudulent talk of being against "forced" integration of lily-white suburbs built with tens of billions of federal subsidies; the manipulation of the busing issue.

And then there was—and is—the oppressive, moralistic atmosphere of the Nixon White House. Blue-ribbon commissions were appointed to study student unrest, population, and pornography. Their findings, based on considerable scientific research and much soul-searching, were then dismissed because they did not conform to the tenets of our new state religion, Billy Graham Protestantism. There was the veto of a program providing day care for families that are not poor on the grounds that it favored "communal" methods of child rearing—and the insistence that poor mothers be required by law to accept exactly such "communal" care so that they could be forced into the menial labor market. There was the intervention into the abortion debate in New York State in which the President aligned himself with those who, in the name of the "right to life," would move abortions once again from the hospital to the back alley.

The old Nixon is obviously alive and unfortunately well. If that were all there is to Nixon, one would simply dismiss him as a hack—and not name an ism after him. An observer who realizes there is much more to the President is David Broder. In *The Party's Over* he brilliantly summarizes one of the most distinctive and surprising aspects of the Nixon presidency:

> Most Presidents improvise, even if they are Democrats, and talk the rhetoric of social planning. Republican Presidents are just assumed to be essentially *laissez-faire* in their approach; administrators not innovators. In Nixon's case, that assumption has proven to be dangerously misleading. Indeed, I think the case can be made that there has been more serious, long-term planning at the high levels of the government, actively supported by the interest of the President, in the Nixon Administration than in any of its Democratic predecessors. . . .
>
> It was the Nixon Administration which began the first five-year projections of federal finances—outlining in the Budget and Economic Report its estimates of future governmental revenues and the foreseeable demands upon them as an aid to rational planning. It was President Nixon who reorganized the White House staff and the executive office to facilitate such planning—linking budget and central management functions in an expanded Budget Bureau called the Office of Management and Budget. It was he who regrouped [and expanded] the White House staff into functional units—a Domestic Policy Council, a Council on International Economic Policy, as well as the existing National Security Council and Council of Economic Advisers.

Broder fills out his generalization with even more detail, but his point is now clear enough. Richard Nixon—and this is a crucial defining element in his Administration—is an inveterate socializer. If the Democrats (or the best of them) expanded the domestic power of the state in order to help the poor and working people while unwittingly aiding the rich, Nixon continues this trend—only quite wittingly on behalf of the corporate rich.

CONSIDER FIVE IMPORTANT CASES: welfare reform, economic management, health insurance, technology planning, and revenue sharing.

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• The rhetoric of Nixon's speech on welfare reform in August of 1969 was impeccably conservative: "A third of a century of centralizing power and responsibility in Washington has produced a bureaucratic monstrosity, cumbersome, unresponsive and ineffective." After this bow to the Buckley wing of the Party, the President then proposed to nationalize the welfare system. By establishing a minimum-income floor through federal law Nixon would be forcing the state of Mississippi to raise its welfare benefits by about 500 percent. Part of Nixon's strategy was to deny the very existence of the best things he was proposing. For example, his welfare reform obviously puts forward, in some sense, the principle of a guaranteed annual income, which is what makes it one of the most important social innovations in a generation: yet in this matter Nixon has to conceal his decency.

"I do not favor a guaranteed annual income," Nixon told the Republican Governors' Conference in 1971. "This program [welfare reform] does not provide it. I believe in a system that insures a man is rewarded for working and not penalized." With that remarkable non sequitur the President protested too much: the guaranteed income has always been designed for people out of the labor market and this is as true of Nixon's version of it as of the leftist "Triple Revolution" document of 1964. But in order to make his proposal acceptable to his constituents, Nixon had to put some genuinely reactionary provisions into the legislation as well as making ritual incantations to the states' rights he was so appropriately violating. So welfare reform was called "workfare" and a compulsory work rule was made part of it. This fostered the ugly myth that the welfare rolls are populated by loafers and chiseler—most people getting benefits are actually unemployable. And the benefit levels in the President's proposals were set unconscionably low, at about 60 percent of what a family needs according to the optimistic computations of the Office of Management and Budget.

Yet, for all of Nixon's passion to seem much worse than he is, the new principle he has advanced is the most important structural innovation since the New Deal. There were, I am sure, many reasons why he adopted it, Daniel Patrick Moynihan's persuasiveness being one of them. There also was some responsiveness to a deep-running trend. The existing welfare system has obviously become dysfunctional, even from a corporate point of view. For instance, by having 50 state welfare systems, a tremendous incentive was established for the poor to migrate from places with low benefits, like Mississippi, to those with high benefits, like New York. The most advanced states with the most powerful corporations thus became a dumping ground for America's social tragedies. This was intolerable from a business point of view, as well as from that of the Mississippi poor. Moved by the concerns of the former, Nixon nevertheless had to help the latter.

• Economic policy is another area where old-fashioned reaction would not work and new-fashioned conservatism was required, though it took a while for Nixon to learn this. In the first year of his Administration the President practiced an idiot orthodoxy in fiscal matters. In one of his first budget messages, in April 1969, he said,

> Our proposals mean not only a substantial cutback in the spending of tax dollars in the coming year, but a substantial reduction in claims against future tax dollars and future budgets. With this approach we believe we have made a necessary and significant beginning toward bringing the federal budget under closer presidential control; we have taken the reins firmly in hand.

Three years later, Nixon was presiding over the largest federal deficit since wartime Franklin Roosevelt.

The first phase of the Old Economic Policy involved this attempt at budget bal-

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ancing, a cut in federal employment, and only a 1 percent growth in the money supply. The result was rapidly increased unemployment, the most expensive money for home builders in the century, a rise in the number of the poor—and all without slowing the rate of inflation. Nixon's advisers, John Kenneth Galbraith has remarked, were the worst since the days of Herbert Hoover. Then came the election of fall 1970 and, largely because of a disastrous economic record, Nixon suffered a severe setback. On January 22, 1971, he therefore formally abandoned Milton Friedman's *laissez faire* for John Maynard Keynes's interventionism: "By spending as if we were *at* full employment," he told Congress, "we will help to *bring about* full employment." That was a far cry from the orthodox Republicanism of Eisenhower's Secretary of the Treasury George Humphrey, who was so anxious to balance the budget that in 1953 he proposed a deal with the Chinese Communists in order to cut military costs.

But even with this lurch to the "Left" (really a move to the sophisticated Right, as we will see), Nixon still clung to part of the old faith. "I do not intend to impose wage and price controls," he said in February 1971, "which would substitute new, growing, and more vexatious problems for the problems of inflation." But a month later there were signs that the most vexatious problem of all—the reelection of Richard Nixon—was bringing a change of heart. When Nixon signed the first authorization for wage-price controls in August 1970, he said he would not exercise the power being thrust upon him by a Democratic Congress. In March 1971, he campaigned for a two-year extension of that power. On August 15, 1971, he used it.

Nixon would have preferred to effect conservative goals in a conservative way, but when reality intruded, he was prepared to promote conservatism in a collectivist way. So in his August 15, 1971, message on the freeze he urged a "job development credit" for business, repeal of the 7 percent excise tax on automobiles (which had quickly produced the highest profits ever in that industry), protectionism against Europe, Japan, and the Third World, and state planning and subsidies for "stimulating research and development of new industries and new techniques." The problems of unemployment and inflation were to be dealt with by giving credits and inducements to corporations, which is the essence of late-capitalist collectivism, i. e., of Nixonism, in the United States.

The "job development credit" is symbolic of this process. Its name is a fraud. Just as "right to work" laws never guarantee a right to work, so the "job development credit" will not necessarily develop jobs and most likely will destroy them. It provides an incentive to business for investment in new machinery at a time when there is roughly 25 percent excess capacity and 6 percent unemployment. William R. Galeota explained in the *Wall Street Journal,* in March 1972, why the companies were rushing to increase their capacity even though they had more than they could use. They were anticipating, he said, high labor costs and therefore becoming more capital-intensive; and they were taking this opportunity to put in pollution controls. In the first instance, the "job development credit" could do wonders in creating future unemployment; in the second, the commendable goal of reducing pollution will be "paid" for by the joblessness of men and women whose future work will have been automated out of existence. In all cases, however, business will profit mightily and it is even possible that a little bit of the wealth will trickle down to the people. America would then once more be "prosperous," but its prosperity would be viciously lopsided precisely because of the way the government intervened to stimulate the economy.

The AFL-CIO and the UAW were quick to understand the class character of this post-Keynesian interventionism. It was, they

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said in critiques of Phase I and Phase II of the New Economic Policy, designed to maximize the interests of the companies, the banks, and the rich, and to tightly control the wages of working people. This is why it must be stressed that Nixon's *dirigisme* is not at all "leftist"; it is intelligently rightist as compared to his Old Economic Policy, which was stupidly rightist.

• National Health Insurance is another example of the same trend. Early in the Nixon administration the President had inadvertently referred—accurately enough—to the "crisis" in medicine. The quality of American health was, and is, declining by comparison to other advanced countries. Both England and Sweden, which spend a smaller percentage of GNP on medical care, have much better results through socialized medicine. Medicare and Medicaid, those portions of a comprehensive system that had been passed, increased the demand for health care, but there had been no planning or investing on the part of the government to increase the supply. So there was a tremendous cost inflation as doctors' bills went up faster than any other item in the American family budget. *Fortune* magazine, hardly a Bolshevik periodical,* came out with an entire issue in 1970 documenting the shambles of the American health system.

Reality again dictated a turn to sophisticated conservatism. This need for action must also have been forcibly brought to the President's attention when a senator named Edward M. Kennedy came up with his own comprehensive health-care bill (the Kennedy–Griffith bill). In Kennedy's approach, the federal tax system, the most progressive source of funds in America (for all of its faults), was to be the primary source for financing a fairly extensive program. Nixon, on the other hand, proposed that all interstate employers provide medical and hospital insurance for employees under private contracts. In the first period the employer would pay 60 percent of the cost and, later on, 75 percent. The federal government would set up its own program of paying for those who were poor, unemployed, etc.

In other words, Nixon wanted to subsidize the private health insurance industry—an industry that, since it is basically a disbursement agency, has never shown the least cost- or health-consciousness, and has contributed mightily to the recent inflation. Ironically, businessmen pointed out a basic defect in the Nixon plan: it would motivate the corporations to fire marginal workers in order to avoid these statutory costs. Thus the Nixon scheme was certain to socialize a windfall for the insurance companies and, as the "job development credit," would probably make full employment all the harder to realize.

Typically, Nixon thrashed a straw man to bits in the course of arguing for this plan to put the private companies on the dole. He was, he said, against the "nationalization of our health insurance industry" for that "would deny people the right to choose how they will pay for health care. It would remove competition from the insurance system—and with it an incentive to experiment and innovate." That description of the glories of the present private setup must come as a shock to those people who have seen its costs mount and its coverage decline.

Mr. Nixon also held that "the federal government would pay nothing for this program; the costs would be shared by employees and employers, much as they are today under most collective bargaining agreements." To translate this into real terms: not only would the private health insurance system become the government's handsomely subsidized check-writer for medical care, but the corporations, which have always

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* For some time now *Fortune* has been an ideological organ of corporate collectivism, particularly in the writings of its staff philosopher, Max Ways. Ways was enthusiastic about Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, quite rightly stressing to businessmen that it was basically corporation-oriented in outlook. It was easy enough for him to accept the more unashamedly corporatist perspective of Nixonism.

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demonstrated enormous ingenuity in passing federal taxes onto the consumer, would by doing so become the regressive taxing authority for the financing of the plan. All of this makes little sense if one is primarily concerned with creating a decent health system in America (in which case one would go beyond even Kennedy–Griffith, the best hope today, which should be enthusiastically backed and provide free care womb-to-womb for every citizen, i.e., *real* socialized medicine). It is, however, completely rational from a Nixonist perspective for dealing with an intolerable health situation but only in such a way as to shore up the established order.

In this case, one gets the feeling that Nixon is responding negatively, warily. His attitude toward technology, by contrast, is much more aggressive and positive.

• Karl C. Harr, the president of the Aerospace Industries Association, described Nixon's Technology Opportunities Program in a January 1972 article in the *Wall Street Journal* (the President himself has constantly alluded to the broad outline of the scheme but not, to my knowledge, to the details). Both governmental and private bureaucracies had been canvassed for information about innovations that would help solve domestic problems and/or make the United States more competitive on the world market. These suggestions have been screened by the Domestic Council, the International Economic Policy Council, and the Office of Management and Budget. Policies are now being considered that would encourage the hopeful technologies through research and development tax incentives; loan guarantees with, or without, reimbursement of interest; government development funding; accelerated depreciation; governmental purchase; a technology development bank; liberalization of the antitrust laws.

This, I take it, is one more clear indication of the reality that undergirds Nixonism: that the old, entrepreneurial capitalism is utterly incapable of dealing with problems at home and abroad and that state planning and subsidization are now essential. If carried out, this program will mean that the enormous profits resulting from the intervention of the government will be assigned to private corporations. Here, and in every other area of national life, Nixonism uses the most modern methods—including the very substantial planning mechanism of the Technology Opportunities Program—to preserve, and even deepen, the class inequities in the society.

• But it should not be thought that these things can be done easily, for Nixonism is a profoundly contradictory doctrine, not the least because it is a philosophy of transition. This became clear in the "New American Revolution," proclaimed by the President in January 1971 and described by John Mitchell, then attorney general, as the most important development in American history since the Constitution.

The "Revolution" was introduced with the usual Nixon incantation: "The time has now come in America to reverse the flow of power and resources from the states and communities to Washington, and to start power and resources flowing from Washington to the states and communities and, more important, to the people all across America." The keystone of this proposal was revenue sharing, an idea Nixon borrowed from Walter Heller and the Democrats—i.e., from those very centralizers whom the President regards as the source of our present problems. That in itself might cause one to ask if the "Revolution" is going to live up to its rhetoric.

A key falsehood in that rhetoric was stated in the January 1971 speech: "Local government is the government closest to the people. It is people's government in a far more intimate way than government in Washington can ever be." This geographical truism is a political falsehood. For the poor, the minorities, and the organized working people, the federal power, however distant in miles, has been much more accessible

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than state government (until recently controlled by rural conservatism and now under the dominance of the suburbs) and city government (in which real estate interests usually prevail). But if it is not true that local government is "closest to the people," it is certainly true that it is closer to the conservatives than Washington is. As far back as the 1950s the sophisticated rightists insisted on "local planning" in the Urban Renewal Program they detested. That enabled the local power structures to turn it into an instrumentality of department stores, luxury apartments, and monument building rather than a means of coping with the disintegration of the American city.

Even this right-wing intention must confront reality. As John Osborne described the background press conference on revenue sharing at the White House in 1971:

> Mitchell had a terrible time with the provision that state and local governments must submit comprehensive plans but don't have to get federal approval of the plans. What then, he was asked, did the federal government require? "In the last analysis," Mitchell answered, "it is a requirement that they [the recipients] comply with their own plan." He was reminded that the Justice Department recently had to step in and correct the scandalous use of law-enforcement grants in Alabama, and was asked what he could and would do in such a situation if the new system is adopted. "I don't think we need to get into what might have been or will be until the actual circumstances are presented to us," he replied.

So it is difficult for a conservative president to hand power "back" to the localities since the imperatives of the society, which he himself recognizes in other contexts, require centralization and planning. There is a contradiction between Nixon's political values, which still contain much old-fashioned rightism, and the economic and social facts of life in America. One could see that most clearly in the President's March 1971 message on revenue sharing in transportation.

"We err," Nixon said, ". . . by treating the transportation challenge as a series of separate problems rather than as a single problem with many interrelated parts." This is the new Nixon, a case for systems planning. But then: "The hard fact is that the best mixture of transportation modes is not something that remote officials in Washington can determine in advance for all cities, of all sizes and descriptions, in all parts of the country." Transportation, he concluded, "is a national concern and that is why it should continue to be funded in part from federal tax resources. But the specific manner in which any city or metropolitan area goes about achieving this goal is not something that can be most effectively determined at the federal level."

A good part of what the President said is patent nonsense. The *only* place where an intelligent decision can be made about the proper mix of various modes of transportation is in Washington. That clearly involves choosing between alternate *national* approaches: mass transit as against the private automobile, trains as against planes or buses, etc. Saying that, however, does not mean that the planners would then impose the specifics of a national policy upon a given locality but only that the choices open to that locality, in the future as at this very moment, would be determined in considerable measure by the kinds of transportation available to it. That availability is currently decided by private industry and a series of unplanned, uncoordinated federal subsidies. So Nixon completely misrepresented the problem once he dropped his quite accurate generalities about the need for a systems approach.

This obfuscation is, however, functional. Effective federal planning could well intrude upon the plans of the automobile companies, and they are special allies of the President. For instance, Nixon joined them in opposing congressional standards on auto pollution. In transportation and revenue sharing as in everything else, Nixonism seeks a maximum of federal financing and aid along with a

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minimum of federal interference with the private interests working to turn that social spending to their own advantage and, often enough, to antisocial uses.

Nixonism must reconcile increased federal planning and spending with the persistence of private power. It socializes, but only on behalf of part of the society. Its methods are incipiently non-, or even anti-, capitalist; its purposes are impeccably pro-capitalist. In the long run this synthesis is inherently unstable.

III

Let us try to put Nixonism into historical and political perspective.

The use of state power for private purposes is hardly an invention of Richard M. Nixon. Long ago Marx and Engels described Bonapartist and Bismarckian "socialism," and in his theory of "state socialism" Karl Kautsky analyzed planning, and nationalizing, *capitalist* governments. In America there were sophisticated businessmen, like Mark Hanna, who favored such intervention. The National Recovery Administration of Franklin Roosevelt, with its legally sanctioned cartels, can be seen as the culmination of a corporate dream. Still, when the Great Depression made it imperative that the state save the capitalist economy from itself, business tended to be in violent opposition, and the New Deal contained, in Richard Hofstadter's insight, more of a "social democratic tinge" than any administration in American history.

During World War II, the executives began to learn that the New Deal agencies would not be at all hostile, if only they were staffed by reliable Republicans. But the mass of conservatives did not understand these sophisticated—and concealed—goings-on and Eisenhower compaigned in 1952 as if he intended to dismantle the welfare state. He did not dismantle it because he could not, and one of the functions of his administration was to legitimate welfarism—conservative welfarism, to be sure—on the Right. But even while accepting much of what he said he abhorred, Eisenhower remained true to the ideal of a passive presidency. That was one of the main reasons his Administration was marked by chronic unemployment and growing poverty.

With Richard Nixon—and this is the historic significance of the ism that bears his name—American conservatism adopted the ideology of corporate collectivism, at home and abroad.

Nixon himself cannot afford to be too blunt about these matters. Two business spokesmen were, however, quite explicit about it this year, and I will quote them at length. David Rockefeller wrote,

> During the 1930s when the social contract binding business to society was being extensively rewritten, the business community resisted innovation and wound up with some unpalatable reforms and a blemished reputation. Now, with the social contract again up for revision, new social and environmental problems are generating increasing pressure for future modification and regulation of business. By acting promptly, business can assure itself a voice in deciding the form and content of this new social contract. By taking the initiative, it can contribute technical competence, rational analysis, and imaginative innovation to the process of adjusting our system—but it must recognize that some adjustments are inevitable.

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And Simon Rao told the White House Conference on the Industrial World Ahead,

> The modification of the structure of operations needed to exploit the new technology will involve massive startup costs. These systems become economical only when there are millions of users [even as with telephones or TV]. Required are billions of dollars in operating losses, with more billions at risk for years before turnaround into a profit period. The pioneering capital needs are beyond what even the largest corporations are likely to consider. Despite the economic gain inherent in the productivity increase, the speed with which this technology can come into existence is contingent on teaming of corporations and government. The government may need to sponsor large-scale experiments and encourage joint ventures of private industry to share risk.

Politically, then, the choice is not between free enterprise and state intervention (it really never was) but between kinds of state intervention. The Democrats have more than their share of corporatist tendencies (as I documented at length in my analysis of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society in *Toward a Democratic Left*) but they contain the forces that might make this statism a servant of the people rather than of the wealth. The Republicans, as Richard Nixon illustrates, are dedicated to socialism of, for, and by the rich. They are embarrassed about their collectivism, which explains their quaint rhetoric, but since billions are at issue they have managed to get over their qualms.

I take Nixonism to be a portent of the end of the capitalist epoch. I do not mean this, alas, in a Marxist sense: that a democratic movement from below is finally taking control of the means of life. I mean it in the spirit of Joseph Schumpeter: that the capitalists themselves are inexorably being forced to liquidate their ethic, psychology, and eventually their distinctive form of society itself. If they are allowed to do this on their own—which is what Nixonism is about—we will back into the future with the old, intolerable values intact, and the new technology will provide an advanced basis for immemorial repression. But Nixonism also allows an opening to the Left. Now that the state is being used so blatantly in the private interest, we can perhaps better educate the great mass of people that it must instead be used in the common interest of mankind. □

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Robert Lekachman

Toward a Reordered Economy

Ideologically, this is a time of startling events and strange alliances. Increasingly prominent on the polemical scene are the new social-science conservatives, often former liberals or radicals. They are featured in the *Public Interest, Commentary,* and the *New York Times Magazine*—able scholars and publicists like Nathan Glazer, Roger Starr, James Q. Wilson, Irving Kristol, and Daniel P. Moynihan. They play contemporary variations upon such traditionally conservative themes as the inflexibility of human behavior, the durability of institutional arrangements, the pervasiveness of social class, and the consequent limitations of the results that can reasonably be anticipated from government efforts at social meliorism.

Their de facto allies, for the time being at any rate, are chastened New Frontiersmen and Great Societarians, particularly the economists among them, who are passing their political exile in such locations as the Kennedy Institute and the Brookings Institution. There people are rediscovering how limited are the resources available to the federal government and reassessing the impact of liberal Democratic efforts during the 1960s to improve the condition of the poor and the black. The recent valuable Brookings analysis of the budgetary framework of national action amounts to a confession, topic by topic, of liberal bewilderment. In education no one knows whether compensatory effort, integration, community control, or an appropriate combination represents an acceptable, let alone the optimum, means of teaching the children of the poor enough for financial survival in a technological society. All that the housing experts assert with any confidence is that urban renewal and public housing are complete or partial disasters. Nor have the specialists designed a national health scheme that satisfactorily combines such desirable objectives as delivery of good medical and hospital care to the entire population, protection of the victims of medical catastrophe from penury, and limitation of soaring hospital and physicians' charges. Whether job training programs actually help their clients to get and keep better jobs is still another unresolved issue. And almost nobody believes that social services have substantially benefited large numbers of welfare recipients.

Possibly because they hope soon to leave their comfortable Elbas and reassume responsibility in Washington, the social-science liberals have not given up hope, like the conservatives, that better programs will yet be devised, perhaps by the same individuals now identifying the inadequacies of social engineering in such volumes as *Setting National Priorities: the 1973 Budget,* the Brookings study I have mentioned. But for some time to come caution and experiment, rather than massive financial injection, are the recommended policies.

To accept the vision of the real world shared by the new social-science conservatives and repentant Great Society economists is also to conclude that no president will in the next few years be capable of effecting

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any but the most marginal shifts in national priorities and their attendant shifts of federal resources. Large new actions will be frustrated by exceedingly severe financial limitations. If Congress accedes to the Pentagon's demands—for new bombers, and submarines and modernization of existing land-based missiles—and if Congress eventually enacts some version of revenue-sharing and welfare reform, these add-ons plus the extra cost of an all-volunteer army, the upward creep of prices, and the predictable escalation of social security benefits will in the fiscal year 1975 generate a deficit at full employment of $17 billion and a still larger sum if we are operating at less than full employment. Thus, the most activist of presidents would in his initial term be hard-pressed to finance new programs for mass transit and environmental protection, or to enlarge older subsidies to the public schools, universities, and hospitals.

Moreover, argue the Brookings experts, even if the money were available, a responsible man in the White House would be sobered by the programmatic failures of the recent past and the lack of evidence that superior alternatives are available. As a resident of Washington, D.C., he is likely to be shaken by such episodes as the city's adventures in the construction of small town houses for low-income families. By official estimate, the houses will cost the taxpayers $53,000 each or, if debt service is included, $76,000 each. Fifty-four families will enjoy better living quarters, and a whole clutch of land speculators and builders will enrich themselves.

Many noble experiments don't work and rare is the prophet who can tell in advance which will succeed. In St. Louis the Pruitt–Igoe project, now partially demolished, was once hailed as model public housing. Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, celebrated as a resolution of church-state quarrels over parochial education, now turns out to suffer from grave misallocations of appropriated funds and wide departures from its stated emphasis upon assistance to inner-city schools. After the euphoria, the audit.

A liberal Democrat will presumably bug fewer phones, appoint more enlightened jurists to the Supreme Court, end the Vietnam war, and act more vigorously against unemployment—each an improvement over Nixon policies not to be scoffed at. But the upshot of the Brookings study is that if he tries to do much more he will risk serious inflation and the failure of insufficiently tested new programs.

II

Kennedy-Johnson social programs are, naturally, susceptible to a different interpretation. To begin with, many of the popular criticisms are addressed to legislation passed in 1964 and 1965. These programs were fiscally stunted and deprived of adequate congressional attention by the national obsession with Vietnam. Any rational person would have expected at least a decade of modification before Great Society innovations operated as well as the Social Security Administration, the Veterans' Administration, and the Internal Revenue Service. The diversion of psychic energy from domestic reform to an increasingly unpopular foreign war was more damaging to the Great Society than the shortage of cash. I suppose that an optimist might conclude that once the Vietnam abomination were halted, a Democratic president could shift his constituents' attention back to domestic concerns. He would pick up where Lyndon Johnson left off before pursuing that coonskin to hang on the White House wall.

For radicals there is a more important moral to be derived from the 1960s. Broadly speaking, the decade's failures in social change, alleged, actual, or probable, coincide with its service strategy. Although the Great Society retained and enlarged older income-maintenance programs for pensioners, veterans, the blind, the unemployed and welfare clients, its cherished novelties usually focused on provision of greater quantities of

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education, job training, housing, medical services, and counsel to selected groups. Of the two other major strategies of social intervention—redistribution of resources and redistribution of power—Lyndon Johnson can be said not seriously to have tried the first and to have done some unexpected things with the second.

It is well to be clear that Great Society programs were not financed by heavier taxes on the affluent. Quite the contrary! The implicit social contract upon which Lyndon Johnson proceeded until Vietnam swallowed up available revenues was tax reduction for the prosperous and social benefits for the less fortunate, both financed by rapidly growing tax revenues, even at reduced rates, from a booming economy. The Great Society was neither proclaimed nor operated as an exercise in the redistribution of income and wealth. In 1963, 1964, and 1965, profits most agreeably swelled, the stock market surged ever upward, and conglomerateurs and performance-fund wizards enjoyed the brief fame chronicled by Adam Smith in *The Money Game*.

In some ways the Great Society did encourage a limited redistribution of institutional power, but not always to the right people. One needn't endorse Daniel P. Moynihan's sweeping put-down of community-action programs to recognize that with embarrassing frequency the rewards of new opportunity went to shake-down artists, rhetorical radicals, Black Power militants, and eager candidates for co-optation by the Establishment. Nevertheless, community-action programs and the encouragement given in housing and model-cities legislation to tenant groups helped train a new generation of black leaders and triggered Nader's accountability revolution. Movements for welfare rights, women's liberation, gay liberation, ecological action, and convict protection attest to the rising political consciousness of formerly quiescent or apolitical groups.

Few famous victories have been won. Even the success of OEO Legal Services attorneys, young, bright, and devoted, in expanding the legal rights of welfare recipients is being eroded by the conservative majority on the Supreme Court. Still, on the present evidence and despite the best efforts of the Nixon administration, the revolt against public and private bureaucratic power shows every sign of continuing and growing in vigor. These can scarcely have been the results Lyndon Johnson expected when he declared war against poverty in late 1963.

It is possible, at length, to discern the possibilities of comparatively radical political action. A left-liberal administration should emphasize redistribution of both power and resources because equality is preferable to inequality. Service strategies inevitably stigmatize their presumed beneficiaries by the income testing that surrounds them. Free choice is the governing principle not only of market economies but of free peoples. No doubt public services—supportive, rehabilitative, or restrictive—must continue to be available for alcoholics, drug abusers, psychotics, and criminals. For the rest of us the guarantee of money or a job will turn the trick.

III

Fiscal limitations upon substantive change will be greatly relaxed *if the changes are sufficiently large*. This is neither paradox nor play upon words. Brookings pessimism is based upon the political judgment that only small changes are possible either in the tax system or the expenditure structure. Once this assumption is denied, resources suddenly become available on a substantial scale.

Brookings proposes to cut the Pentagon budget at most by $12 billion. A radical rethinking of the nature of strategic deterrence, NATO troop levels, the multipolar character of international politics, and the viability of American meddling in world affairs could, however, result in potential reductions of the Pentagon take closer to George McGovern's proposed $32 billion.

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Still more can be done with regard to revenue. A *return to the federal tax levels of 1962 would generate $45 billion of new 1973 revenue.* Taxation of inheritances larger than $500,000 at 77 percent rates (another McGovern scheme), imposition of an effective minimum tax on total income, treatment of capital gains as ordinary income, phasing out of mineral depletion allowances, repeal of the investment tax credit, and closure of expense-allowance loopholes might recover for the Treasury a third to a half of the $60–70 billion tax benefits now enjoyed mostly by the wealthy.

The first priority for the new Administration must be the budget. Sharp reductions in military spending and still sharper increases in tax collections could plausibly release up to $90–100 billion for public programs. One of the most important is a generously funded Negative Income Tax, with stress upon the words "generously funded." Milton Friedman's NIT, as adapted by the present Administration's Family Assistance Plan, sets benefit levels at little more than half of poverty-line income and conditions even these meager sums upon fulfillment of onerous work and training requirements. FAP aims at tighter factory discipline, an abundant supply of domestic labor to launder Russell Long's shirts, and regimentation of the poor—not at the redistribution of income from rich to poor persons. In the more generous states, FAP would reduce the benefits now paid.

In the writings of James Tobin and other liberal economists, the Negative Income Tax emphasis is upon redistribution. Individuals and families above as well as below the poverty line will benefit—the working poor as well as the unemployed, but also a segment of lower-middle-income America. The destitute would receive cash grants. The working poor would benefit from income supplements. The slightly more fortunate would enjoy tax remissions. In its original form, the McGovern minimum-income grant, a version of the NIT, would have junked present welfare programs and furnished families of four below the $4,000 poverty line with $14 billion in cash grants and granted families between $4,000 and $12,000 either cash supplements or tax remissions worth an additional $29 billion.

How redistributionist this income strategy is depends on where the cut-off point is located, the size of individual benefits, and the manner in which new revenue to finance the scheme is extracted from those above the cut-off point. Without getting bogged down in the Internal Revenue Code, I simply note that it is *possible* to transfer $43 billion from the affluent to the vast majority of Americans who earn less than $12,000 annually. It is highly *desirable* to finance the transfer by slightly higher taxes on $12,000–$20,000 incomes, moderately higher levies on $20,000–$50,000 incomes, and sharply increased imposts on incomes above $50,000. In the long run, the most essential feature of the redistributionist strategy is limitation of inheritance. Just because the elder John D. Rockefeller was the most efficient (and pious) buccaneer of his age, why should various Rockefellers be actual or potential governors and the unelected urban planners of metropolitan New York? For how long are plutocracy and political democracy compatible?

Yet another requirement of redistribution is the attainment and maintenance of full employment, still the most powerful of antipoverty programs. The current disarray of economic management in England and this country and President Nixon's ludicrous experiments with three successive economic prophets—Friedman, Keynes, and Galbraith—teaches three lessons. First, economic managers who deliberately create recession do not cure inflation when powerful corporations and advantageously situated trade unions possess the market power to push prices and wages upward even at the cost of sales and jobs. Hence, second, decent attention to the efficient operation of the economy, as well as common human-

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ity to the unemployed, requires stimulation of aggregate demand by an appropriate blend of budget deficit and monetary ease. The only way, third, to cope with the inflationary implications of market power plus full employment is through the aid of a permanent structure of wage and price controls. These are rendered both essential and administratively feasible by the location of market power in a relatively few places.

IV

The right to an income guarantee substantially enhances the legal and political situation of its recipients. In the courts there has been a strong tendency to define welfare as a gratuity paid at the discretion of public authorities. Although for a few years the Warren Court broadened the legal rights of welfare clients, the Burger Court has retreated on this point. There is all the difference in the world between being on welfare and living off such respectable public benefits as social security, a veteran's pension, or unemployment compensation. In the latter situation, beneficiaries are citizens possessing full constitutional rights. The welfare population is in a much less happy situation.

What may enhance self-respect and promote self-assertion even more than an assured income is the guarantee of a decent job. Economists are divided between one group that thinks sufficiently aggressive fiscal and monetary policies will create genuine full employment, and a second group arguing that structural unemployment—the mismatch of unemployed persons with the available jobs—is for a variety of educational and social reasons a permanent feature even of boom periods. Too often the education and skills of the unemployed fall beneath the standards set by a meritocratic society. The unskilled blue-collar job, traditional point of entry for newcomers from other countries or our own South, is diminishing in relative importance. Those jobs that do remain are located in distant suburbs where low-cost housing does not exist. The appalling rates of unemployment in inner cities, partly concealed in official statistics, reflect a crisis of the internal migration of poorly educated and racially persecuted Southern blacks.

I am myself a convert to the structuralist hypothesis. It follows that unless the United States accepts the presence of a permanent underclass of unemployed blacks, Puerto Ricans, and Southern whites, still another major federal initiative should be a vastly expanded, long-range program of public-service employment. The most generous measure now before Congress is the Cranston–Hawkins bill which proposes an annual appropriation of $10 billion to finance 1.6 million new public jobs, approximately a third of the officially unemployed. Although a larger program is desirable, Cranston–Hawkins promises 10 times as many jobs as the Emergency Employment Act that was reluctantly signed by Nixon.

A properly designed program will embody provision for advancement, integration into civil service, and substantial community control. Potentially, several objectives will be served. Above all, public jobs offer decent work, a chance to advance, and a revival of self-esteem. Men and women engaged in useful work will reassure partisans of the puritan ethic. Enlarged public employment is an opportunity to improve our shoddy public services. By comparison with most more or less civilized lands, the United States is a lightly taxed country and the results are visible.

Two other benefits of massive public job creation are of great importance. The first is a refocusing of American preferences for consumer durable goods toward the human services. What tarnishes private affluence and casts increasing doubt on the assurances of the income statisticians that per capita real income is on the increase are environmental deterioration, inadequate school, hospital, and medical services, rickety public transportation, insecurity of person and property, and the general decline in public

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amenity. The cure is not more durable goods: it is a larger supply of the missing human services.

A guarantee of public employment, finally, promises radical change in the organization of labor markets. Conservatives accurately fear what radicals should rejoice in: assured jobs and incomes will fatally disrupt the coercive management of labor. It is only the fear of unemployment and income loss that enables industrial engineers to subdivide work into meaningless assembly-line and clerical tasks. Once public policy dissipates this fear, the challenge will be to design work that offers some human gratification to ordinary men and women. What ought to be recalled is not only the Vega but the Vega assembly line. This is the message from Lordstown.

I have mentioned the rising political consciousness of new groups. A correlative is the declining legitimacy of older institutions, e.g., the large corporation. For those who seek further to humble the mighty, there are two available strategies. One may assume after A. A. Berle and J. K. Galbraith that the large corporation is a permanent presence economically justified by its contributions to research and development and the techniques of mass production and distribution. The necessity is then to civilize and regulate these powerful social organisms. Berle hoped that corporate managers would develop social consciences. Galbraith expects that the enlightening influence of the educational and scientific estate will be exercised upon the technostructure administering the corporation. His supplementary policies include nationalization of defense contractors and close price regulation of the unnationalized remainder. National policy molded by Galbraith would restrict antitrust action to flagrant cases of financial manipulation, epitomized by some of the conglomerate mergers of recent years. On the whole, Galbraith prefers regulation and taxation to the dismemberment of major corporations.

The alternative way of handling the large corporations is to fragment them, on the ground that the case for the economic efficiency of the corporate goliaths is unproven, competition is destroyed by their presence, and politics are distorted by their activities. In this view, the therapy is radical antitrust action, directed against all corporations whose size is not justified by economies of scale. The radical trustbuster believes that once the market power of large corporations is dissolved, cost-push inflation will no longer be troublesome and, in a truly competitive environment, there will be no need for wage and price controls.

Since I regard the large corporation as a central institution of both capitalist and socialist industrial society and radical antitrust as a policy nonstarter, I should want my man in the White House to urge upon Congress a permanent system of wage and price controls. Like the reform of the tax system, the controls are desirable both in themselves and as the prerequisite to other desirable policies.

V

In summary, then, if I were at the right (or better the left) hand of a new president of appropriate opinions, I should want him to cut the Pentagon down to size and restructure the tax system. With the proceeds, he should finance income redistribution via a negative income tax, public jobs, and a variety of programs designed to protect the environment, protect consumers, and enlarge housing, training, and job opportunities. My student of DISSENT and Michael Harrington would be at least as eager to redistribute power as income. Full-employment fiscal and monetary policy, buttressed by guaranteed public jobs, will rapidly restructure labor markets and enhance job satisfactions. Effective taxation of inheritances and gifts will in a generation limit the power of money over American legislation and elections.

The failures of Great Society policies were failures of custodial liberalism, not of radi-

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cal policies. Great Society liberalism was a well-intentioned prescription for the better preparation of poor people for the same old capitalist rat race. Social democrats require, as Lyndon Johnson did not, structural change in the ownership of resources and the location of power.

Redistributionist strategies have not failed. They have scarcely been tried. As I earlier suggested, the timid stabs by the poverty program at transfers of political power to constituencies of poor and black persons often had startling effects. One of them is the agony of the Democrats over the McGovern–Fraser rules for delegate selection.

Liberalism may have reached a dead end. Its cherished managerial techniques may have faltered or what amounts to almost the same thing, the liberals seem to have lost their nerve. Radicalism American-style has yet to be tried.

So many startling events have in recent years occurred, that this may actually be the year in which South Dakota populism persuades an electoral majority. If, by some minor miracle, George McGovern is inaugurated next January, he will lack neither the policies nor resources to initiate a number of significant steps toward genuine social democracy. □

A Tribute

AT intervals, I am asked by a book editor who has suffered from a failure of imagination to write an essay on the most overlooked book of the last ten or twenty or fifty years. I do not respond, but the book that always comes to my mind is Ben B. Seligman's *Main Currents in Modern Economics.* Perhaps I am wrong in saying that it was overlooked. Among knowledgeable economists it is well known and greatly admired. But it deserves a far wider audience. It is a work of enormous scholarship, wholly accessible to the diligent layman, and concerned with all of modern economic thought. Ben Seligman read prodigiously, thought carefully about what he read, and had something important and interesting to say about both author and work. There has been no other economist in recent times quite like him.

I am attracted by Seligman's work, I am sure, because I find his point of view congenial. He was a liberal. He had an instinctive sympathy for the underdog and the man of modest means; he believed in greater security, greater equality, and more personal liberty; his commitment was real and not verbal. In keeping with this concern, he spent most of his life in the trade union movement. A liberal and compassionate view of the needs of man informs his judgment of the work he discusses. But it would also be hard to imagine a man less dogmatically inclined than Seligman. He finds much in those ideas with which he most disagrees. Also—an important thing in a history of economic ideas—he is always concerned to let the authors speak for themselves. Only after their ideas are in view does he enter with his own judgments. Had I to single out the most important contribution of this book, it is the brilliant and sympathetic study of Thorstein Veblen, John R. Commons, and such more recent American scholars as Clarence Ayres and Gardiner Means. There is a tradition in American economic theory which downgrades American dissenting thought. Snobbishness has something to do with it. Had these men begun their scholarly careers in Vienna or Budapest or even Oxford or Cambridge, they would have been great figures on the American scene. Coming as they did from Wisconsin or Texas, they were never deemed quite respectable. Seligman accords them the place they have rightfully earned in the American pantheon.

With many others, I had come to look eagerly for each new book of Ben Seligman's. I dont know when I have felt quite such a sense of loss as when, while in Europe last year, I read of his death. It was a loss not in the personal sense for I did not know him well; I had rather the feeling that one of the main sources of my education had somehow disappeared. But he did leave behind this truly remarkable book—a book I firmly believe to be one of the most valuable works in economics of our generation.

JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH □

Preface, © *by John Kenneth Galbraith, to* Main Currents in Modern Economics, *by Ben B. Seligman, published in three volumes, in paper, by Quadrangle Books in 1971.*

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William L. Taylor

Busing: Realities & Evasions

August 3, 1972

By the California primary last June, the major Democratic contenders had settled uncomfortably into what has become the new litany on school integration and busing. McGovern and Humphrey both declared against "massive" busing but for "reasonable" transportation. They supported busing to meet "the requirements of the Constitution" but were opposed to it "solely for the purpose of achieving racial balance." Citizens should obey court orders, but they doubted the validity of some court decisions, notably one by a federal district court requiring school integration on a metropolitan basis in Richmond, Virginia. And they opposed busing children to schools where they would receive "an inferior education."

In July, the Democratic national convention adopted a civil rights platform that was less equivocal, reminding the nation that the long and anguishing effort to obtain compliance with the Supreme Court's 1954 decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* had not yet been completed and affirming the use of busing as one instrument for accomplishing integration. But McGovern in his acceptance speech omitted almost entirely the civil rights record of the Nixon administration as an issue he would take to the people this fall.

The reason for all of this discomfiture on the part of both McGovern (whose political courage on most issues is beyond dispute) and other Democrats is not hard to discern. While George Wallace's victory in the Florida primary might have been achieved even without the busing issue, his solid win in Michigan can be explained only by his successful exploitation of public fears stimulated by court-ordered school desegregation in Detroit.

President Nixon has served clear notice that he intends to employ the busing issue to defeat the Democrats in November. Apparently surprised that the Burger Supreme Court has held firm in school integration cases, Nixon has deemed it expedient in the past two years to intervene in desegregation matters and to undercut the efforts of his own secretary of HEW to enforce the law. In March, the President found time between summit meetings to unleash an all-out attack on lower federal courts, accusing them (without specifying courts or cases) of having gone far beyond "what most people would consider reasonable" and what the Supreme Court has said is necessary in ordering desegregation and having embraced "extreme remedies." This diatribe was part of a message to Congress proposing legislation that would have postponed for a year the implementation of any court order requiring busing and then would have permanently banned any increase in busing at the elementary school level.

Despite uneasiness in Congress about the consequences of a "probusing" label, the Nixon bills initially received a chilly reception on the Hill. Some congressmen were concerned that placing a moratorium on court enforcement of federal rights (something successfully attempted only once previously, in the aftermath of the Civil War) would establish a dangerous precedent.

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Many more were aware that the odds were great that the the Supreme Court would declare the Administration's bills unconstitutional, tossing the issue right back to Congress, perhaps before the November election. And a fair number were prepared to incur some political risk rather than to write off so cavalierly all the sacrifice that had been expended in the effort to eliminate racially segregated schools.

So the Nixon proposals were shelved and in their place Congress adopted a foggy compromise (supported by McGovern against the wishes of civil rights lobbyists who believed it was a dangerous retreat). The new law provides that for 18 months no court-ordered desegregation may go into effect until all judicial appeals are exhausted. But there is a catch: the law provides for such postponements only where the purposes of the court order are to achieve a "balance among students with respect to race, sex, religion or socio-economic status." Since judges ordinarily issue orders only to remedy what they conceive as violations of the Constitution and not to achieve a racial balance, there is little likelihood that the new legislation will be widely applied except by courts otherwise disposed to find reasons for delay.

Soon after the compromise passed Congress but before the President signed it into law, Federal District Court Judge Stephen Roth indicated preliminary approval of a comprehensive plan for integrating public schools throughout the Detroit metropolitan area starting in fall 1972. The timing could not have been better for the Administration, since it enabled Nixon to put on a superb mock show of going through the agonies of presidential decision-making while he was actually engaged in political haymaking. Mr. Nixon knew and let the American people know that the new law was unlikely to prevent Judge Roth's decision from going into effect since the order was not on its face designed to achieve racial balance. What the President must also have known but chose not to disclose was that, since the decision involved legal issues that had not been definitively settled, the Court of Appeals would undoubtedly exercise its discretion to stay it anyway (as the Court subsequently did). The President ultimately signed the bill, but not before causing tremors in the university world by suggesting the multibillion-dollar higher education bill to which the compromise was attached might have to be sacrificed because the "antibusing" provision was too weak. He then let it be known that if a Democratic Congress was so inept in slowing down the courts and the "extreme social planners," he might be compelled to seek a constitutional amendment to settle the matter once and for all.

Congress was once again under pressure to enact restricted legislation. And the lines were being drawn for the 1972 campaign, with the Democrats clearly on the defensive.

II

The current furor over school integration is indeed traceable to several recent federal court decisions, and since their holdings have been so widely misrepresented, what the courts actually said and did is worth some attention.

The key Supreme Court decision, *Swann v. School Board of Charlotte-Mecklenburg,* held that busing, provided it did not endanger the health and safety of children, must be employed where necessary to disestablish the old dual school system in the South. In addition, two sets of lower federal court decisions could have a significant impact upon the course of school integration, *if their principles are affirmed by the Supreme Court.*

The first set of cases holds that school authorities in the North may not build their assignment, boundary, transfer, and construction policies upon segregated residential patterns where government has been involved in housing discrimination and where the school board has feasible alternatives that would result in less segregated schools.

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The second set of decisions, best exemplified by the Richmond and Detroit cases, holds that where integration is not feasible within the confines of a central city because black children constitute a disproportionately large percentage of the public school enrollment and where this is traceable to racial discrimination in which government has been involved, integration across district lines in a metropolitan area may be ordered. Together, *Swann* and the lower-court decisions would result in (1) far more extensive integration of Southern school districts that have had only token desegregation; (2) integration of schools in Northern communities that, while often more rigidly segregated than their Southern counterparts, had not believed themselves under any obligation to remedy the situation; (3) integration across district lines in the many metropolitan areas both North and South where central city schools are predominantly black.

The legal bases of these decisions are not difficult to ascertain. Charlotte, North Carolina, had followed a pattern of resistance to integration typical of many Southern cities. Even when, other devices having been exhausted, the school board adopted a geographic assignment plan, it gerrymandered zone lines, constructed new schools in areas designed to serve only all-white or all-black student bodies, permitted whites to escape integration through free transfers, and maintained all-white and all-black faculties to insure the racial identifiability of each school. All of these findings of the district court judge were in the record that reached the Supreme Court and were hardly disputed, notwithstanding the peculiar implication of Nathan Glazer in the March issue of *Commentary* that the Supreme Court acted on "only one piece of evidence suggesting an effort to maintain segregation."

What was in controversy was Judge McMillan's determination to undo this discrimination and minimize the possibility of resegregation by approving a plan under which one-race schools were eliminated and almost all schools roughly reflected the 71 percent white to 29 percent black composition of the total school community. To accomplish this required additional busing. But the Supreme Court held that busing was a "normal and accepted tool of educational policy" and that "desegration plans cannot be limited to the walk-in school."

Since the busing proposed for integration compared favorably with existing busing of children for other purposes, in terms of numbers (15,000 for integration v. 23,600 students now being bused in an 84,000-student system), average distance (7 miles v. 15 miles each way at present), and average time (35 minutes v. more than an hour each way at present), the Court could hardly conclude that the plan posed a risk to the health or safety of the children or impinged on the educational process.

In the Northern and metropolitan cases, the courts have been impelled to reexamine a long held assumption that segregation, except where imposed by statute or explicit school board policy, is "adventitious" or "fortuitous" or "de facto" and, accordingly, not properly redressed by the courts. Lawyers representing black parents and their children have challenged this belief and have asserted instead that school segregation is the product of policies and practices of racial containment in which government at all levels is directly implicated. To prove this contention, the lawyers cited the policies of the Federal Housing Administration during the 1930s and 1940s when, in helping to create whole new suburban communities, FHA advised developers that no community would be 'stable' unless it was racially and economically homogeneous. Federal pronouncements then made it clear that schools as well as neighborhoods had to be segregated and that, if necessary, racially restrictive covenants, zoning laws, and even busing for segregation had to be used to keep them that way. The evidence included urban renewal programs of the

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1950s, which displaced black people from their homes and located them in new ghettos, and even the newer subsidy programs of the 1960s under which housing is still being built and operated on a segregated basis. Testimony showed that racial separation could not be explained solely as a function of free choice, or private practices of discrimination, or even a lack of sufficient money to go elsewhere (though poverty itself of course is a product of racial discrimination). The hand of government in creating segregation was everywhere.

Given these facts, Professor Glazer's statement on the issue—"But why should it be the right or the duty of the federal government and the federal judiciary to destroy the ghetto as a place of refuge *if that is what some blacks want?*"—is cruelly if unintentionally ironic. The answer is clear: because the federal government helped create the ghetto in the first place and because the Constitution of the United States does not permit government to imprison racial groups in ghettos even if some people are content with their confinement. After government has righted its wrong, those black people who view ghettos as places of refuge will be free to create their own, just as *some* members of immigrant groups have done.

The legal issue facing the courts is quite different from the one posed by Professor Glazer. It is whether government discrimination is redressed simply by steps to undo housing segregation or whether school authorities must be compelled to alleviate racial separation. Since it is generally conceded that effective redress for housing discrimination is a process that will take 30 to 40 years at a minimum, it is not surprising that some courts have concluded that there must be a more expeditious remedy for the harm that black children are now suffering in segregated schools.

A misunderstanding of the basic facts and legal issues has led some people to rationalize their opposition to court-ordered school integration by characterizing the decisions as social experimentation or a capricious numbers game. But by and large the legal questions are of interest primarily to lawyers and ideologues. Most citizens are far more concerned about the potential impact of particular remedies upon their own interests. Yet even as to remedy, the debate has proceeded at something less than an exalted level.

Antibusing groups have argued principally that busing for integration would be massive and very costly, that it is unsafe, that it requires small children to spend a disproportionate part of their day traveling long distances, that bused children would be excluded from extracurricular activity and suffer other inconveniences.

Civil rights groups have answers. They note that the yellow school bus has become an American institution during this century; that almost 19 million children—43.5 percent of the total public school enrollment—are transported to school daily; and that the largest increases took place in the 1940s and '50s during the drive to replace one-room schools with more satisfactory educational facilities. While it is true that busing has continued to increase (though at a reduced rate), less than 1 percent is attributable to integration, according to figures supplied by the Department of Transportation. Thus, even with the new legal requirements placed on Southern school districts by the *Swann* decision in 1971, busing for integration is a negligible part of the whole transportation picture.

Nor is busing particularly costly. Even in districts with large school transportation needs, busing does not ordinarily account for more than 2 percent of the total school budget. While it is true that any additional expenditures may pose problems for hard-pressed school boards, the need for financial aid to property-poor districts is an issue far broader than busing. Indeed, the Nixon administration has made matters worse by refusing to permit districts under court order to tap available federal funds

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for the purchase of buses. In a few places, this policy has contributed to a shortage of buses resulting in staggered school schedules that inconvenience parents and children. Not surprisingly, the families adversely affected are mostly black.

The answers to safety concerns are clear-cut. In 1971, the National Safety Council reported statistics showing that there is far less danger of accident to children who are bused to school than to those who walk or are transported by passenger car.

Neither have the charges that court-ordered integration involves long and arduous bus rides for small children withstood analysis. Recently, civil rights researchers examined busing in 14 districts, including those on which the Nixon administration placed greatest reliance for its claims of "excessive busing." Among the areas were such Southern districts as Nashville, Tenn., and Tampa, Fla., which were compelled by the *Swann* decision to broaden their desegregation plans, and Northern districts where courts had found a basis for ordering desegregation during the 1960s. Of the 14 districts, 6 experienced no increase in the duration of average bus rides as a result of court-ordered plans (San Francisco and Oxnard, Calif., Pontiac, Mich., Arlington, Va., Jackson, Miss., and Savannah, Ga.) Three districts experienced an increase of 10 to 20 minutes (Nashville, Tenn., Norfolk, Va., and Manhasset, N.Y.). The greatest increase in time was from 20 to 45 minutes in Tampa, Fla.

In no district was the average ride more than 45 minutes after the implementation of a desegregation plan. The median average ride in the 14 districts was 20 minutes prior to implementation of the plan and 27 minutes afterward.

Even in the cases involving metropolitan relief, the logistics may be no more difficult than desegregation plans for a single district. The most complex situation exists in Detroit, where, under Judge Roth's plan for the city and 52 surrounding suburban districts, more than one-third of the 780,000 children may require transportation. But most of these students are already riding buses and the Judge's order contemplates maximum trips of 40 minutes. In Richmond, Judge Merhige's plan for the consolidation of the city and two suburban county school districts would add 10,000 to the number of children being bused in a 104,000-student area. Bus rides would average 35 minutes, with a maximum of 45 minutes in five subdistricts and one hour in a rural area—less than the maximum times for children who are now being bused for reasons other than integration. In Hartford, Conn., where another metropolitan suit is pending, much integration might be accomplished without any busing at all, since the bulk of the minority population lives in the North End, a neighborhood immediately adjacent to affluent white suburbs.

Other arguments for opposing metropolitan integration are equally subject to challenge. For example, Professor Glazer and others have portrayed Richmond-type cases as giving "enormous control to central school bureaucracies," thereby diluting the control of local communities over their own schools. The facts are to the contrary. Under the Richmond plan, the new consolidated district would be divided into six subdistricts consisting of 15,000 to 20,000 students in each. While the details have not been specified, each subdivision could be delegated broad authority to determine the kind of educational program that best meets the needs of children in the area. This might well include the hiring of faculty and administrative personnel and decisions about curriculum and the allocation of budget.

Having a voice in educational policy is particularly important to black people whose children often face a difficult struggle for equal treatment in physically desegregated schools. But here, too, the available evidence suggests that community participation of minority and low-income parents in school affairs will increase, not decrease,

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under metropolitan integration arrangements. Parents in Evanston, Ill., Rochester, N. Y., and Boston, Mass., whose children have moved from racially isolated to integrated schools have reported feelings of greater participation and influence in their children's education in the new situation than there were in the old.

So if by community participation or control we mean the accountability of school officials to parents, the involvement of parents in shaping educational goals and programs, and the reinforcement at home of the good things that happen at school, there is every prospect that the process will be enhanced by integration. There is no conflict between the goals of community control and integration, unless, of course, Professor Glazer and his confreres are using the term "community" as a euphemism to describe separate racial and economic groups.

A further contention of integration opponents is that the effort is bound to be futile since white parents inevitably flee integrated schools for suburban neighborhoods or private schools. They draw upon the experience of abortive, piecemeal efforts to integrate central city schools where the burden of change fell mostly upon working-class white and black families.

But these conclusions do not apply to metropolitan plans. In the Richmond metropolitan area, where there is a minority population proportionately as large as in any area in the nation, the consolidated school system would have an enrollment 66 percent white and 34 percent black. Under the plan, all schools would have enrollments ranging from 18 to 40 percent black.

Such an arrangement enhances prospects for stability. The flight of white people from an area sometimes may be based on racism and other times upon a judgment parents make that schools consisting of a majority of advantaged children offer the greatest educational benefits. In either case, the dangers of rapid resegregation are decreased where the obligation to desegregate is system-wide and the racial and economic class composition of each school is within a defined range. Professor Glazer notes, however, that the private school option remains open and conjures up a picture of whole metropolitan public school systems being turned over to less affluent whites and blacks, everyone else with $100 in the bank presumably having fled to private schools.

Experience does not bear him out. In Charlotte and Tampa, where the integration plans are metropolitan in character and one-race public schools have been eliminated, the declines in public school enrollment have been relatively small and, if the pattern that has prevailed in other Southern communities holds, many of those who have left will soon be back in the public schools. It requires a view of the American people as incurably racist to suggest that they will be ready and willing to shoulder the major financial burdens of private education to avoid even a modest degree of integration. The greater likelihood is that where all public schools are integrated and all consist of a majority of advantaged children, most people will have an incentive to stay where they are and make integration work.

III

Antibusing arguments based on considerations of cost, safety, distance, community control, and feasibility are all answerable both in terms of logic and experience. The trouble is that these arguments are often camouflage for the real concerns of parents —that if their children are bused to inner city schools, they will be exposed to racial hostility, drugs, and violence.

A partial answer is that these fears, real though they may be, often turn out to be unfounded. In September 1971, Pontiac, Mich., an industrial suburb of Detroit with a history of racial problems, became the national symbol of racial conflict over school integration. The schools opened under a court-ordered plan that required cross

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busing and assigned white children to formerly black schools in the inner city. Prior to opening day, ten buses were destroyed by bombs, a crime for which five members of the Ku Klux Klan were later indicted. There followed organized efforts to boycott the schools, picketing at the schools, and shouting of epithets at students. Many racial incidents between students occurred inside the schools.

Yet a few weeks later, after adult picketing ended, the schools became calm. Police statistics at the end of the school year revealed that 90 percent of school-related crime had occurred during the first month of adult-inspired turmoil. Administrators and principals reported in the spring to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights that problems had been no worse than in previous years and some principals commented that things were going better.

During the year community support for integration began to build. An interracial organization of seventh graders is putting on skits in the elementary schools about experiences with integration and has signed up more than 1,000 members. The 7,000-member PTA, though suffering a number of defections when it supported the integration plan, has mounted a program under the banner "Let Us Make It Work." The response to a *Time* magazine interviewer of one white seventh grader, who attends a previously black junior high school that is now 55 percent white, is typical:

> We can do it fine if they'll let us alone. I've made a lot of friends here at Jefferson, and my best friend, that's Keith Fowler, he's black. I'd like to have him come over and spend the night, but my dad wouldn't allow it. I've stayed at Keith's place though. . . . I guess we were all afraid of black people. I guess the blacks were worried about us too. At the beginning just about everybody sat at all-white tables in the cafeteria, and the whites and blacks wouldn't talk to each other very much. But we've only had twelve big arguments or fights at Jefferson since school started. . . . The adults say that seventh graders can't grasp the situation, that we're too young. Well, how can they tell? They aren't the ones in the school. They're not trying to make it work. We are. We have to live together and grow up together so we can keep this earth going. Busing shouldn't be the solution to segregation. But it's one way we can get to know each other.

The adjustment to integration in Pontiac is not atypical. In Tampa, which has an extensive cross busing plan requiring longer rides than most, similar acceptance has been reported. In Pasadena and elsewhere, parents who initially opposed integration now support it. They have coped with a few racial incidents involving older children and believe that as children whose early years have not been spent in racial isolation move through school, the incidents will decline.

There are other factors that enter into the political calculus of integration and busing. Candidates who rely upon the conventional wisdom that black interest in integration has waned may be making a mistake. Many black parents with children in desegrated schools *have* been disillusioned. They have found their children subjected to teachers who are insensitive or racist, to courses of study that ignore the black heritage, to exclusion from extracurricular activities, to the taunts of white students. But most have not drawn the conclusion that because this new phase of the desegregation struggle is difficult the whole effort should be abandoned. They view the struggle to win equality of status in desegregated schools as an integral part of the effort to win equality of status in a biracial society. And many sense that students who are shielded from any interracial contact in the name of avoiding mistreatment will be ill prepared for the struggle for equal status they will face after school.

Most important, blacks, Chicanos, and other minorities do not view as friendly acts the statements of President Nixon or other politicians who are manipulating the busing issue for political gain.

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At a recent education conference sponsored by the congressional black caucus, some of the loudest cheers of the 600 black educators, parents, and community leaders were for Derrick Bell, a black civil rights activist and Harvard law professor, who warned that the antibusing onslaught jeopardized all of the civil rights gains won since 1954. After a careful review of the political and educational limitations of other types of school initiatives including community control, Bell concluded: *"The right of black children to attend integrated public schools—quite literally whether exercised or not—is a right that is crucial not only to black success, but to black survival in this country."*

A further aspect of the metropolitan litigation, little noted but of potential political significance, is that support for integration is coming from white central city residents as well as from blacks. In Richmond, the city school board was a principal moving party in the law suit. In Detroit, a group of white city residents initially raised the metropolitan issue. And in Wilmington, Hartford, and other places where cases are pending, white city dwellers have also expressed support.

Not all of these people are truly convinced of the need for school integration. But they do assert with justification that the burdens involved in change should be shared by the generally more affluent citizens of suburbia, not simply by the white and black working people of the cities.

It is true, of course, that city dwellers, like blacks, constitute only a minority of our suburbanized nation. Still, it is surprising that liberal political leaders have not undertaken to explain to white city residents that metropolitan approaches may be in their interest—by distributing the burden of change more equitably, by giving their children along with blacks access to better educational opportunities, and by helping to defuse the conflict between blacks and whites in the inner city.

IV

When all has been said, however, it can hardly be denied that the busing issue spells trouble for McGovern and the Democrats. Fears are not easily allayed and in any event no one will pretend that the effort to undo the effects of centuries of racism can be accomplished without some difficulties and sacrifices for all citizens.

How important busing is in a sea of Democratic troubles is harder to assess. Antibusing hysteria usually reaches its peak in September and early October after school opens and tends to subside when the schools, freed from the pressures of pickets, boycotts, and violent rhetoric, are permitted to operate a bit more normally. This fall there are fewer major new integration plans scheduled for implementation than in recent years. Perhaps the best pragmatic course of action for McGovern and liberal Democrats is to stick to their defensive posture, continue to mouth their platitudes, and hope to ride it out. Still, it is interesting to speculate on the possible impact of a more aggressive and candid approach—one more in keeping with McGovern's image as a man who speaks the hard truth to the American people and proposes solutions to difficult problems.

Such an approach might begin with the recognition that our public education system ill serves the needs of all but the most privileged of Americans. If ways can be found to improve the quality of education for all people, initiatives to assist the least advantaged citizens will not appear so threatening.

While lack of money for schools is hardly the principal cause of educational failure, a restructuring of our system of school finance could be a liberating influence in American education. Continuing to rely on the regressive property tax system that makes the funds expended on each child's education a function of the property wealth of the area in which his parents live makes no sense. A better alternative would be to

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shift to income taxes, with the federal government assuming a large share of the burden. But, McGovern could say, the federal government can assume financial responsibility only under guarantees that educational expenditures will be geared to need and that equality of opportunity will be afforded to all children.

Similarly, the metropolitan initiatives proposed for racial integration are also consistent with what is needed to upgrade education for all children. New types of school facilities, such as education parks, located to serve both city and suburban children, could provide integration while alleviating the problems associated with cross busing. Such facilities could also be organized to accommodate programs to serve the gifted and the handicapped, to improve teacher training, to use television as an aid to individual instruction, and to provide other educational aids too expensive for each neighborhood school.

It is Richard Nixon—this argument would run—who has diverted attention from the real crisis in public education by setting the interests of black against white and fanning the flames of racial mistrust. It is Nixon who has eased the tax burden for the wealthy by vetoing legislation to invest in early childhood education, day care, and other measures to meet the needs of the majority of citizens.

Above all, an honest approach to school integration would put before the people the real alternatives. Simple justice and common sense require that we replace the present welfare mess with a new income maintenance system, but if that system itself is not to become a permanent dole, we must find ways to give poor and black children the critical educational skills needed for success in a technological society. No one yet has found a feasible way to impart these skills to children locked up in ghetto institutions. And if we yield to pressures to stop school integration, we will have to reconcile ourselves to garrison cities in which fear prevails and in which we deal with drugs, crime, and poverty by quarantining victims rather than striking at causes.

In conclusion, a presidential candidate fond of preaching the social gospel and concerned about the spiritual health of the people might say:

> *If Mr. Nixon prevails and his legislative proposals to halt school integration are enacted, life will go on. But there are certain things we should then be prepared to admit to ourselves. We will have to acknowledge that law is no longer a means of carrying out our highest aspirations and goals but of expressing our worst fears and prejudices.*
>
> *We will have to concede that the purpose of our public education system is not to educate our young to full humanity, that it is not a moral as well as an intellectual enterprise. We should also recognize that in the process of shielding our children from contact with children of other races and income groups, we may be equipping them poorly to function in the racially hostile world we have created for them.*
>
> *And, finally, in candor we will have to admit that the lesson we have taught ourselves* and our children *is that as a people we are meanspirited, not generous; fearful and cautious, not courageous; callous, not compassionate.*
>
> *That may be Mr. Nixon's picture of the American people, but it is not mine. I know we can do better.*

There is only a bit of recent precedent for this kind of approach to the issues of school integration and busing. Governor Reuben Askew of Florida has spoken out along similar lines and although large masses of people have not yet been converted, he has won respect for his honesty and apparently has not suffered politically.

Still, forthright talk about busing is probably high-risk politics in the year 1972. One thing, however, is pretty clear: if national leaders can not soon muster the courage to try to stem the tide of race conflict, by the time they do the country may be ungovernable or not worth governing. □

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Chandler Davidson

Stalking the Southern Working Class

"With Negroes as the national Democratic Party's base, Deep South whites—once third parties no longer seem plausible—should follow their opinion-molding classes into the Republican Party. Not only conservatives of Dixiecrat antecedents, but also populist poor whites, are likely to take such a course."—KEVIN B. PHILLIPS, 1969.

"White wood haulers, who were Ku Klux Klan sympathizers if not actually members of the Klan a few years ago, came out in numbers to support Mr. Evers during the gubernatorial campaign. They gave him a sizable vote in this area in the November election, which was won by William Waller, white Democrat."—*New York Times,* January 2, 1972.

The South is up for grabs in the 1970s. With 22 senators, 106 representatives, and almost one-fourth of the votes in the electoral college, the region's strategic significance in national politics has stirred the imagination of both right-wing Republicans and left-wing Democrats.

The South's allegiance to one-partyism is weakening. Interpretations of this development, however different in other respects, depend upon a familiar stereotype of the white, lower-income Southerner. But a study of voting patterns I have carried out in three of the region's major cities raises doubts about this stereotype.

Liberals traditionally have hoped that the Bourbon Democrats would defect to a minority right-wing party whose strength would be based on affluent whites. Purged of economic conservatives, the new Democratic party of the South, still a majority, would then consist primarily of the less affluent whites and blacks, as it does in the rest of the country.

The Republicans, from Goldwater to Kevin Phillips and Nixon, see the South differently. The two-partyism they envisage would depend not upon economic but on racial cleavages. Their party would contain the affluent whites who are the Republican mainstays outside the South, but also the middle- and lower-class whites who dislike the racial policies of the national Democratic party. Wealthy economic conservatives would thus become the bedfellows of their former class enemies.

Which version is more plausible? Are race or class issues crucial to working-class whites?

Both strategies are based on the view that the less affluent Southern white is the agonized victim of cross pressures. He has urgent

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economic needs, and he is aware of the national Democrats' somewhat more accommodating attitude toward him. But he knows that the party of the Kennedys, of Johnson and Humphrey has in a faltering manner helped to bring about the racial changes he sees going on around him. He is caught in a bind. If he votes Republican, he votes against his pocketbook. If he votes Democratic, he votes for still more racial change. What is he to do? The Republican strategists think that his racism will win out.

In a more optimistic era, progressives believed, on the contrary, that economic liberalism would carry the day. But the success of Goldwater and Wallace in the Deep South during the 1960s ushered in a season of despair, with the consequence that liberal and conservative strategists alike now are inclined to accept the view of the ordinary Southern white as irredeemably racist.

This, I contend, is a serious mistake. Voting data spanning a decade in three of the South's major cities—Houston, Atlanta, and New Orleans—support another interpretation. My analysis of 40 elections in these cities reveals that the pattern of support given to racially liberal or black candidates by various white economic classes has differed significantly in the various types of elections. When the racially liberal candidate was also an economic liberal, lower-income whites were more likely to support him than were upper-income whites.[1] Yet in elections where economic issues were absent, class differences in the support for racial liberals were variable: sometimes the wealthier whites gave more backing to the racial liberals, sometimes the poorer whites did, and in other cases there was no difference by class.[2]

In very few instances racially liberal or black candidates have succeeded in capturing a majority of the white votes, though they often did not need it in order to win. The black vote was sizable enough and sufficiently unified to provide the necessary majority when it was combined with a white liberal minority. In all likelihood, the sophistication and energy of the black electorate throughout the South will soon enable progressive candidates of both races to win office in many electoral units even if they do not have the support of the majority of the white voters.

The image of the ordinary Southern white voters as rigidly racist is challenged by their behavior in Houston. Consider for example their partial support for Barbara Jordan, now a black state senator whose victory this spring in the Democratic primary virtually assures her a seat in Congress. In 1962 and in 1964, she ran unsuccessfully for the Texas House of Representatives. Although unable to obtain a majority of the white vote in either election, *she nonetheless received about twice the percentage of votes in the low-income white precincts that she received in the most affluent ones.* In 1964, she got about 30 percent of the vote in the poorest white precincts, as opposed to only 18 percent in the wealthiest ones. Miss Jordan was endorsed by Houston's white labor leaders and campaigned as an economic liberal, advocating a state minimum wage law, industrial safety measures, and civil rights reform.

Ralph Yarborough's pattern of support in Houston is even more clear-cut. Yarborough, the state's leading liberal politician in the 1960s, voted for every civil rights measure in the Senate during his tenure from 1957 to 1971. A friend of labor unions, small businessmen and small farmers, he was opposed

[1] The following interpretation is based upon voting precinct returns rather than individuals' ballot behavior as the unit of analysis. By generalizing from precinct figures to individual behavior one runs the risk of committing what sociologists call the "ecological fallacy." There are reasons to believe that the data under discussion allow for such a generalization. Those who are skeptical are invited to correspond with the author.

[2] Chandler Davidson, *Biracial Politics* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1972).

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in his 1964 contest by Houstonian George Bush, a Goldwater Republican (and currently UN ambassador) who attacked his civil rights record. Yarborough carried 89 percent of the black voters in Houston. He also carried the low-income white precincts by a clear majority—while the wealthiest precincts gave him less than a third of their vote, and the precincts in Houston's ultra-rich River Oaks subdivision gave him only about 10 percent.

The case of Bob Eckhardt, now a U.S. representative, is also instructive. Eckhardt is one of the most liberal members of Congress both on economic and racial matters, which is consistent with his earlier record in state politics. A longtime champion of conservation measures, a racial liberal during the days of "massive resistance," an intelligent foe of the oil and gas industry in a state where such a stance is often labeled traitorous, Eckhardt obtained 87 percent of the black vote in his 1960 Democratic primary race. In the low-income white precincts, he garnered 64 percent of the vote, compared with 29 percent in the wealthiest areas.

In every election analyzed in Houston, lower-income whites have given disproportionate support to the racial liberal or black candidate whenever he also campaigned as an economic liberal.

The pattern was less clear when the racial liberal did not advocate economic liberalism —as in school board races, where economic matters were usually ignored. Even then, lower-income whites were less likely than upper-income whites to support the liberal in only one race out of five.

Of the three cities, Houston and New Orleans provided the more dramatic illustrations of this voting pattern. Yet the same pattern, if less distinctly, also emerged in Atlanta. There, too, lower-class whites were more likely to support racial liberals than were upper-class whites whenever the racial liberals were also economic liberals. In all the New Orleans and Houston contests we analyzed in which economic and racial liberalism were espoused by the same candidate, lower-class whites gave more support to the racial liberal than did upper-class whites. In all three cities, the combination of lower-class whites and a strongly unified black vote was sometimes sufficient to elect a racial liberal, as in Hale Boggs's 1964 congressional race. That year Boggs received 93 percent of the black vote in New Orleans. (In 1965 he joined with five other Southern congressmen in support of the Voting Rights Act.) His Republican opponent, riding on Goldwater's coattails, received 45 percent of the total New Orleans vote. This meant that a considerably smaller percentage of the white ballots went to Boggs, yet he received majority support in some of the most impoverished white precincts.

Several studies have shown that much the same voting pattern occurs in other areas of the South, even during periods of intense racial polarization. In such states as Tennessee and Texas, general elections and the Democratic primaries bring confrontations between racial and economic liberals on the one hand and racial and economic conservatives on the other. Within the Texas Democratic party, for example, Ralph Yarborough typifies the liberal leader, John Connally the conservative. Indeed, John F. Kennedy made his fateful trip to Texas in 1963 in order to try to smooth over the rift between the two men and to reconcile the factions they represented. In the Democratic primaries of some of the Southern states there is a tradition of factional cleavages along class lines descending from Populism via the New Deal. In others, especially in the Deep South, these conflicts manifest themselves occasionally, though more often they remain latent as a result of the Bourbons' successful efforts to obscure class differences with racial ones.

There is no compelling reason, consequently, to suppose that race must always override economics among ordinary Southern whites. One need not deny that racial

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prejudice exists, but must deny that it necessarily predominates in the political decisions of less affluent whites. Nevertheless, the view seeing them as rigidly and totally racist is so widely shared—by Republicans, liberals, and, most important, by blacks—that it can become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

This stereotype can be traced to long-standing class prejudices that received the imprimatur of liberal social-scientific opinion during and after World War II. The numerous studies of the "fascist mentality" and the "authoritarian personality" pointed to the marginal classes as the repository of all sorts of unhealthy psychological syndromes and spiritual maladies. Perhaps the most influential political work in this genre was an article by Seymour M. Lipset, first published in the 1950s, entitled "Working-Class Authoritarianism." [3] Here Lipset argued that the allegedly greater prejudice of the working class and the poor significantly affected their political behavior.

According to the conventional interpretation of Southern politics in the 1960s, relying heavily upon the idea of working-class prejudice, racial reform in the old Confederacy was frustrated by the masses of lower-income whites. The middle-class, better-educated whites often were portrayed in such interpretations as the overt or covert allies of blacks in the struggle for racial justice.[4]

Social science contributed to this stereotype by linking prejudice to a personality syndrome, a more or less permanent psychological structure that dictates hostile behavior toward "outgroups." This approach was popularized in Jean-Paul Sartre's influential *Réflexions sur la Question Juive,* published in 1946 and later widely read in translation.[5] Sartre denied that we can "look upon persons and characters as mosaics in which each stone coexists with the others without that coexistence affecting the nature of the whole." In a famous passage he also denied that a man "may be a good father and a good husband, a conscientious citizen, highly cultivated, philanthropic, *and* in addition an anti-Semite." Sartre's insight into the prejudiced personality was brilliant. But as Gordon Allport has pointed out in his comprehensive study of prejudice, not all hostility toward outgroups can be traced to deep-lying, irrational attitudes that are invulnerable to change.[6]

Yet a popular portrait of the ordinary Southern white depicts him as the omnibigot: opposed to anything humane or decent, he is an "aginner," a one-gallus nincompoop with Snopesian sentiments who in another age would have rallied to a native Hitler and who does, in fact, support George Wallace, the nearest thing in our secular left-wing politics to the Antichrist. As a racist, the Southern common white cannot according to Sartre's dictum be a good husband or father. He is not capable of good citizenship, cultivation, or philanthropy. In a word, he is depraved, which is another way of saying he is a "redneck." (The very epithet, so relished by commentators on Southern politics, has overtones of its linguistic cousin, "nigger.")

From its very inception, the theory of working-class authoritarianism has been under attack. Evidence in support of the theory was found to be inconsistent or inconclusive. Many of the attitude studies on which it relied used faulty instruments. One of the major political movements said by Lipset to rest on the working class, the white Citi-

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[3] Seymour Martin Lipset, "Democracy and Working-Class Authoritarianism," *American Sociological Review,* 24 (1959), pp. 482–502.

[4] An example of this kind of analysis is found in James Q. Wilson's "The Negro in Politics," in Talcott Parsons and Kenneth B. Clark, eds., *The Negro American* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966), pp. 423–47.

[5] The English version was published as *Anti-Semite and Jew* (New York: Schocken Books, 1948).

[6] Gordon Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Reading, Mass.: Addison Wesley, 1954).

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zens Councils, turned out to be supported primarily by the business and professional classes. In his recent lengthy review of the theory, Richard Hamilton has probably dealt it a fatal blow,[7] and Robert Coles's important new studies of "middle Americans" also provide fresh ammunition for the theory's critics.[8]

Yet, one suspects, the practical-minded person will dismiss such controversies and point to what seems an incontrovertible fact: lower-income people support demagogues, especially in the South. How account for the mass backing of George Wallace or the Dixiecrats or Huey Long, if not in terms of "rednecks"?

Again, the evidence is more complex than the question suggests. Is Barry Goldwater, who in 1964 was heavily supported by the Southern middle and upper classes, less demagogic than George Wallace? Is it accurate to put Huey Long in the same category with Wallace? T. Harry Williams, Long's biographer, places him within the tradition of egalitarian reform, and credits his "share the wealth" movement with forcing Roosevelt's New Deal to the Left.[9] And while Long's strongest support came from Louisiana's "little people," he was not a race-baiter. As W. J. Cash put it in *The Mind of the South,* Long was "the first Southern demagogue largely to leave aside nigger baiting and address himself mainly to the irritations bred in the common white by his economic and social status." [10]

The Dixiecrat movement, like Goldwater, received its strongest support from the Southern Bourbons. Its reactionary economic position alienated the less affluent whites. The nature of Wallace's support, too, requires closer scrutiny than it is usually given. A recent study of the 1968 elections, using an index of class that is probably more accurate than many others employed in interpreting survey results, revealed that outside the South the working class gave only one percentage point more support to Wallace than did the middle class.[11]

ANOTHER OFTEN IGNORED FACT is that many of those whites whose economic position makes them potential converts to racially progressive politics are not taking part in the electorate at all. This fact is clearly seen when we consider the demography of two very different kinds of population in the South: the voters and the nonvoters. These two groups differ in almost every politically important respect—whether size, racial and class composition, or policy preferences. These differences can be traced to the small percentage of voters among the less affluent people, who evidently feel much less compelled to cast their vote than does the rest of the population.

Both V. O. Key and more recently Richard Hamilton, in analyzing opinion survey data, have demonstrated that the 17-state Census South is as liberal on economic issues as the rest of the nation.[12] Yet, because a lower proportion of the less affluent people cast their votes, the Southern electorate as an aggregate is not only racially conservative, but also far more economically conservative than the Southern population as a whole. Hamilton found that if nonvoters in the five Deep South states had gone to the polls in 1964 and voted their expressed preferences, Johnson rather than Goldwater would have carried their popular vote.[13]

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[7] Richard Hamilton, *Class and Politics in the United States* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, forthcoming).
[8] See Robert Coles's ongoing study of "ordinary Americans," entitled *Children in Crisis.*
[9] T. Harry Williams, *Huey Long* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969).
[10] W. J. Cash, *The Mind of the South* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1941).
[11] Richard Hamilton, *op. cit.*
[12] Richard Hamilton, *op. cit.;* see also V. O. Key, Jr., *Public Opinion and American Democracy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961).
[13] Richard Hamilton, *op. cit.*

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Turn-of-the-century Bourbons must have understood this trend when they enacted the laws that discouraged not only blacks but also lower-income whites from voting. The disfranchising laws and practices, some of which are still in effect today, account in part for the fact that in the 20th century the turnout of Southern voters in no presidential election has involved even half the adult population—in contrast to the latter half of the 19th century, when the turnout ranged between 50 and 75 percent of all qualified males. In some recent Texas elections, as little as 15 percent of the adult population has provided an electoral majority for a gubernatorial candidate in the Democratic primaries.

Changes of two sorts could conceivably destroy the Bourbon Democrats' hegemony in the South—and at the same time stave off "the emerging Republican majority" or a permanent Wallaceite minority playing a spoiler role. One possible change would be the introduction into electoral politics of radical economic programs by progressive candidates—policies designed to begin fundamental shifts in the distribution of wealth, income, and resources. As my voting analyses have shown, even among the voting population in some Southern cities, lower-income whites and blacks will give majorities to racially liberal candidates who are also outspoken advocates of economic reform.

But given the conservative cast of the present Southern electorate, it is unlikely that even a strongly progressive economic platform would insure success to many candidates. The second possibility of change, therefore, concerns the size of the electorate. A doubling or tripling of the Southern turnout would infuse the electorate with the previously disfranchised and with unrepresented blacks and lower-income whites. However difficult it may be to bring about these two changes, it is plausible to think that, once effected, they would mutually reenforce one another.

A case in point is the Huey Long phenomenon. At the time Long began his ascent to virtual dictatorial power in Louisiana, white turnout in senatorial races was around 35 percent. By 1936, the year after his assassination, when the struggle for succession was underway, the white turnout had risen to about 65 percent. A few years later, however, it returned to its previous low level. This brief upsurge was unparalleled throughout Southern states during that period. "The moral of Louisiana," wrote Key, "may be that when leaders raise issues that concern the mass of people, the turnout will rise." [14]

The Long case challenges the assumption that voter apathy among the lower classes is primarily the result of personality defects or cultural norms that remain unresponsive to changes in the political realm. It also raises the question of what the Southern voter turnout would be like if radical economic alternatives were seriously proposed.

OF WHAT, THEN, should a progressive Southern strategy consist? Put succinctly, it should be the mirror opposite of the strategy of Nixon. It should stress the common economic interests of the majority of all Southerners. While not ignoring the race issue, it should emphasize the extent to which racial oppression is perpetuated by economic oppression. It should advocate the dismantling of the tax laws that fall so inequitably upon the low- and middle-income brackets. It should demand strong, all-encompassing minimum wage laws, better working conditions, and decent-paying jobs for all who are willing to work.

There seems to be great potential in the consumer movement for providing progressive politicians with economic issues. A Harris survey in early 1971 found that 83 percent of those expressing an opinion in the

[14] V. O. Key, Jr., *Southern Politics* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1949).

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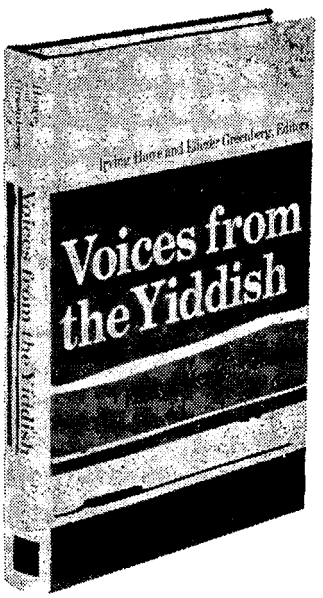
South believed that "in his attacks on American industry, consumer advocate Ralph Nader has done more good than harm."

In essence, a progressive Southern strategy requires coalition politics involving less affluent whites and blacks. At least some blacks, however, are chary of alliances with whites, because they have too often brought minimal payoffs for blacks. Successful coalitions therefore must attempt to achieve aims in the realm of housing, taxation, jobs, and education far bolder and more imaginative than were even dreamed of in the 1960s.

Embarked on by blacks and whites, such a venture could foster the interracial cooperation and respect that has so far not been possible in a segregated system. "One personal experience of a Negro standing at your side in a strike instead of scabbing on you," Harvey Swados has written, "is worth a thousand Hollywood movies on the charm of Negro children and the rectitude of 'tolerance.'" The experience of Charles Evers, who has attempted to weld an alliance between impoverished white wood haulers and blacks seems to bear this out.

What difference will a realignment of either sort make, whether on racial grounds, as the Republicans and Wallaceites hope, or on economic grounds, as the Democrats envisage, if both parties continue to function primarily as bastions of privilege?

The answer is implicit in what has already been written. If economic issues are to overshadow racial ones, genuine radical alternatives must be offered by the Left. Yet until the Democratic party is willing to propose measures for redistributing the nation's resources so as to have an impact on ordinary people, the advent of the liberal version of a two-party South, even if possible, would hardly have the hoped-for consequences. At best, it would simply bring the South into the post-New Deal era, from whose woes the rest of the country has long been trying to escape. The region and its people deserve a better fate. □



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Joseph Epstein

The Politics of William Buckley

Conservative Ideologue as Liberal Celebrity

William F. Buckley, Jr.—author and editor, lecturer and columnist, one-time mayoral candidate for New York City, and leading publicist for the body of thought that goes by the name of conservatism in America—is an intellectual of a very special kind. He is a celebrity intellectual. The celebrity intellectual is a creation of fairly recent times—a creation, specifically, of the television talk shows, of the interview as a staple of magazine publishing, and above all of the national concern with stylishness as a value esteemed for itself. While the celebrity intellectual is ostensibly celebrated for his intellectual accomplishments, the fact is that his celebrity has very little to do with his intellectuality—with the quality of his mind or the power of his ideas—but derives from his ability to perform well for the media, which after all are the only agency in America that confers celebrity.

Not, of course, that Buckley is alone as a celebrity intellectual in America. There are others, among them Truman Capote, Gore Vidal, George Plimpton. For a brief period during and after the Kennedy years, John Kenneth Galbraith and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. might have qualified, but certainly no longer. George Plimpton is perhaps the purest type of celebrity intellectual because his hold on the status of being an intellectual at all is so very tenuous; it seems entirely based on his name appearing atop the masthead of the *Paris Review*. Plimpton's celebrity has been acquired through his own tireless pursuit of other celebrities—in sports, show business, culture—and his career demonstrates that celebrity, like VD, is a communicable thing, to be had by certain kinds of touching.

Norman Mailer, though his celebrity is considerable, is almost the very reverse of a celebrity intellectual. His intellectual work completely outshines his public performance. As a public performer Mailer is quite wretched, a point about which he appears to suffer a large stretch of self-deception. The problem is that Mailer's mind is too complicated; the metaphoric quality of his thinking, often involuted beyond the point of subtlety, does not come across well on either television or the lecture platform. If he is not going on about the "cancerousness" of our national architecture, he will accuse, as he has done on two different occasions, Buckley of being "a totalitarian of language" or Gore Vidal of being "a polluter of language"—nice points no doubt, but offered up as they were to talk-show audiences, points that had as much hope of hitting home as a reading of Maimonides' *Guide to the Perplexed* over the public address system at half time of a Super Bowl game.

If Mailer's complicated earnestness turns audiences off, Gore Vidal's blithe irreverence turns them on. Vidal has one of the best acts in the business—intellectual show business, that is. On one or another talk show, Vidal's act involves coming on all aristocratic and elitist, thumbing his nose grandly at the emptiness of American culture, making clear that America is no longer a fit place

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for anyone even mildly civilized to live in but enjoyable only—and at that, in small doses—for its circus quality. All polished malice, witty contempt, and devastating criticism, up to this point Vidal combines the unrelieved hauteur of a Henry Adams with the unrelenting barrage of insults of a Don Rickles. Then suddenly—presto switcho! and faster than you can say egregious contradiction—he is Gore Vidal the fighting liberal, the enemy of censorship and pollution, the advocate of population control, one of the leaders of the People's party, a living tie with Eleanor Roosevelt, which is to say with the most humane strain of the New Deal. It is the sheerest showmanship unencumbered in any way by substance.

But what of Buckley's celebrity? What is his act? Before going into that, perhaps it needs first to be said that of all the celebrity intellectuals, Buckley is the most celebrated. Celebrated not in the sense of being honored or held up for public acclaim but in the balder sense of being the best known. One can actually hear jokes about Buckley on prime-time television shows, which means, if nothing else, that recognition of his name is national; a recent example was on "Laugh-In," when, in a blackout skit, a man asked a librarian how to find a book by William F. Buckley and was instructed to go down the stacks and turn radically to the right. David Frye, a television performer who specializes in mimicking political figures, has in his repertoire, along with a Lyndon Johnson, a Richard Nixon, a Hubert Humphrey, a Nelson Rockefeller, and a George Wallace, an impeccable Bill Buckley impression. Pencil in air, head thrown back to emphasize aristocratic nose, tongue flicking in and out lizard-like, upper-class accent punctuated by great pregnant pauses, the recognition of Frye's impression is also immediate and inevitably gets howls of laughter. On December 18, 1970, *Life,* doubtless attempting to scratch up a Kennedy family substitute, did a cover story entitled, "The Buckleys, a Gifted American Family." One could extend the list further. William F. Buckley, Jr. has his own syndicated television show, "Firing Line," his own newspaper column, "On the Right," and there even exists a paperback entitled *Quotations from Chairman Bill* (1970).

Perhaps the most solid testimony to Buckley's arrival as a celebrity intellectual is that a large portion of his most recent book, *Cruising Speed* (1971), a journal covering a week in its author's hectic life, was run in the *New Yorker.* What makes this worthy of note is that the *New Yorker* has never been in a more political phase than it is currently, and the direction of its politics is unmistakably leftward. Among such company as Charles Reich, Richard Harris, Senator Fulbright, angry anti-Pentagon and anti-Nixon "Talk" pieces, and exposés of Vietnam atrocities, the magazine found room to accommodate Buckley's prose. Such has become his celebrity that Buckley, an intensely political man, is now in effect a figure of renown above mere politics. As Ozzie and Harriet Nelson and their sons were once America's Favorite Family, as Lassie was once America's Favorite Dog, so Buckley has become America's Favorite Conservative.

Cruising Speed offers an extended glimpse at the large joys and small sorrows of the quotidian concerns of America's Favorite Conservative. I say "glimpse" because things speed by very fast in so crowded a life, and there really isn't much time to concentrate on any single aspect of it. Along with his television show, his column, his work as editor of *National Review,* Buckley receives about 600 letters a week, has some 200-odd invitations to deliver speeches or take part in debates, attends board meetings of foundations and organizations of which he is a director, business meetings for enterprises in which he owns an interest, speaking engagements that he has accepted—and all the while he maintains a vigorous social round:

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concerts, suppers at the Russian Tea Room, visits to such once fashionable rock establishments as the now-defunct Fillmore East, and much more. At one point in *Cruising Speed* he concedes that he does not "spend much time on conscious introspection," and this can hardly come as astonishing news, for there is scarcely time for that in so strenuous a schedule.

Strenuous as Buckley's days are, they are played out under a large fluffy cloud of cash. *Cruising Speed* opens on the little domestic problem of entrapping the Buckley family dogs into the limousine for the trip from the Buckleys' home in Stamford, Connecticut, to their apartment in Manhattan. Chauffeurs, hired help to walk the dogs, country houses, comfortable city apartments, two-month respites in Switzerland, much time dictating in the back of limousines or aloft in airplanes —in so many areas of Buckley's life cash clears the way, cushioning the jars of crowded days. The money is, as perhaps everyone knows, inherited, deriving from his father's oil interests, and, if *Life* is to be believed, since nurtured and made to continue multiplying by Buckley's older brother John's business acumen. Not that inherited wealth ought to be used against Buckley—although it does have to figure in any estimate of his particular brand of politics—for the likelihood is surely great that, without inherited wealth, he would doubtless have turned up a very rich man anyhow. He has the essential attributes of the self-made millionaire: tremendous energy, considerable single-mindedness, and a near-total absence of self-doubt. As it is, having inherited wealth would seem to have made it possible to deploy these same attributes elsewhere—into politics and the career of a celebrity intellectual.

George Santayana, hardly a flaming radical, once said of William James: "He belonged to the left, which, as they say in Spain, is the side of the heart, as the right is that of the liver. . . ." In the sense Santayana intended, Buckley seems almost immediately to have developed an enlarged liver. He apparently never underwent a leftist phase, beginning in idealism and utopian hope, gradually adjusting his views of human nature and institutions, mellowing through experience, and growing more conservative with age. Instead, Buckley came roaring out of the gates a full-blown man of the Right. In 1952, but two years out of Yale, he published *God and Man at Yale,* a book whose chief point was to show that that university's official pronouncements and its day-to-day academic practice were widely at variance, that Yale "derives its moral and financial support from Christian individualists and then addresses itself to the task of persuading the sons of these supporters to be atheistic socialists." Predictably, the book caused a small stir—less, one suspects, because of the cogency of its argument than because of the novel situation it presented: a young mind playing the tunes of old fogyism.

After a brief stint as associate editor of the *American Mercury,* Buckley turned his attentions to Senator Joseph R. McCarthy. In 1954, in collaboration with his brother-in-law, L. Brent Bozell, he published *McCarthy and His Enemies,* a book Dwight Macdonald, an early Buckley-watcher, described as "written in an elegantly academic style, replete with nice discriminations and pedantic hair-splittings, giving the general effect of a brief by Cadwallader, Wickersham, & Taft on behalf of a pickpocket arrested in a subway men's room." Rather like the Spanish Civil War for certain intellectuals of the Left, McCarthyism was evidently, if not a formative, then clearly a crucial experience for Buckley, and one he would return to again and again. The beginning section of his book *Up From Liberalism* (published in 1959 and reissued in 1968) is flush with it, and in 1962 he edited a book of essays entitled *The Committee and Its Critics.* Buckley has long seen McCarthy and the phenomenon of McCarthyism as a touchstone for what he has called "the liberal mania," by which he meant—and presum-

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ably still means—the whole range of liberal attitudes, beliefs, and strategies that he has spent the better part of his career combating.

McCarthy provided a subject that a budding polemicist could get his teeth, nails, and heels into. Every time someone from the Left called McCarthy a demagogue, whose tactics were not essentially different from those of Stalin or any other modern tyrant, Buckley stood ready to score polemical points. Eleanor Roosevelt once compared McCarthy to Hitler; Buckley countered by claiming that the lady, so ready to disdain the Senator from Wisconsin, showed no such contempt for the likes of Andrei Vishinsky, then head of the Soviet delegation to the UN, whose government was responsible for killing millions of its citizens. But the problem was that Buckley really believed in McCarthy. If the Senator appeared as devil incarnate in the writings of the Left, in Buckley's own writing he resembled no one so much as a rather boorish Socrates, telling truth to power (granted, sometimes exaggeratedly), who was, alas, eventually brought down by the liberal elite, which in Buckley's prose often seemed to be taken as one and the same as the state.

That McCarthy was neither the devil nor Socrates but something quite distant from both never seems to have occurred to Buckley—not when the Senator was alive and kicking up dirt, nor even now when the dust has finally begun to clear. McCarthy, it must by now be obvious, was a tremendous self-promoter, whose principal skill lay in manipulating the press, whose principal effect was to bring suffering to a much greater number of people than deserved it, and whose decline came principally because, like most hustlers, he had inevitably overreached himself. As long ago as 1959, Whittaker Chambers, who thought himself not a conservative but a straight-out counterrevolutionary, and toward whom Buckley felt a devotion almost filial in its intensity, remarked of the Senator: "You cannot defend a man who was, basically, not defensible. You only weaken your position when you do; you weaken your future power to defend others. The Senator, in my opinion, did the Right more mischief than he ever did the Left; and he keeps right on doing it." Buckley, however, having accrued a considerable stake in his opinion about McCarthy, never, as far as is known, altered his views. As with McCarthy, so with much else, Buckley would apparently rather be Right than right.

By the fall of 1955, Buckley, now established as a young man of opinions so stringent as to be unwelcome anywhere but among cranks, had raised sufficient money to begin "a new conservative weekly of opinion," the *National Review*. Not yet 30 when the first issue appeared on November 19, 1955, and though he had put up only $10,000 of the $290,000 raised to launch the venture, Buckley retained majority control and took up the dual titles of publisher and editor in chief.

The intellectual diet of *National Review*'s early years was comprised almost exclusively of right-wing anti-Communism; a laissez-faire free enterprise domestic line not much above the level of sophistication to be heard every Wednesday afternoon at the Rotary; and a furiously reactionary antiliberalism—all indelicately cooked and served up with very little garnish. Dwight Macdonald, reviewing the first 11 issues, described it aptly as "the voice of the *Lumpen*-bourgeoisie." "The *NR*'s editorials," Macdonald noted, "are as elegant as a poke in the nose, as cultivated as a camp meeting, and as witty as a prat fall." Although there have since been some defections to death and some intellectual desertion from *National Review*'s masthead—most notable is the absence of L. Brent-Bozell, whose notion of a sound foreign policy for America, as he exclaimed one night at Madison Square Garden in the early '60s, was, for starters, to tear down the Berlin Wall and to invade Cuba—over the years the magazine hasn't really changed much at all.

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The one thing that has remained constant in *National Review* is its tone. Be it breezy or drab, elegant or earnest, consistency of tone is what gives a magazine its character, and as such tone-consciousness in editorial ventures is a matter of no small importance. No one, surely, can accuse *National Review* of not having a consistent tone. Its tone is—and has been throughout its life—an unsuccessful mixture of unwinning elements. It is, by turns, crotchety (James Burnham), pompous (Russell Kirk), pretentious in its yearning to seem aristocratic (the prose of Buckley and various professors of classics at rural universities), and almost never unpredictable. (Such recent article titles as "Can We Do Without the Poor?"—"Papadopoulos All the Way"—"Is Berlin Our European Taiwan?" all appeared in the same issue—April 14, 1972.) Exceedingly clubby, the magazine specializes in self-congratulation. "D. Keith Mano," reads a note "In This Issue," "is 31 years old, and is, many think, not only among the best young American novelists, but now the best one, period"; or, in another issue, "C. H. Simonds is at his wittiest this week, and deserves to be anthologized."

The entire enterprise is streaked through with a blatant undergraduate humor that is, to put it gently, unseemly coming from the middle-aged men who are its editors. Spelling out OEO to read "the Orifice of Economic Opportunists" passes for subtlety in *National Review*'s pages; changing the titles on the masthead so that they read Absolute Editor, Ultimate Publisher, Penultimate Publisher, Presidium of Maximum Editors is considered a riotous joke. But then their idea of a witty cartoon is a drawing of two scientists at the National Research Council, one saying to the other: "Eureka! We've discovered a way of getting blood out of a turnip! Quick—notify the tax department!" They also regularly run the light verse of a man (a woman?) named W. H. von Dreele, which cannot merely generally be relied upon not to scan but is always profoundly unfunny as only truly failed humor can be.

What purpose can *National Review* possibly fulfill? Everywhere predictable, nowhere questioning its own assumptions, always addressing its readers as certified true believers, it can scarcely be calculated either to bring in fresh converts or discuss issues from a serious conservative point of view. Its role is more on the order of the feeder at the zoo, throwing the same bedraggled red meat into the cages of the cats that are its regular constituency. Perhaps in this regard *National Review* is not much different from the liberal weeklies, only more sealed off, less capable of surprises, more crudely aggressive, and less serious. As Whittaker Chambers, himself a journalist of high competence, once wrote in a letter to Buckley: ". . . your belief that *NR* is full of readable copy troubles me most."

Part of the problem resides in simple journalistic ineptitude and personal tastelessness, but an even greater part in what is perhaps the unresolvable problem of conservatism in its application to American life. The question arises whether, since the *Federalist,* and excepting only such occasional, isolated figures as Irving Babbitt, Paul Elmer More, or Albert Jay Nock, there has ever really been a strong strain of conservative thought in America. At various times there have been large pools of conservative feeling, but feeling is not the same as thought. In America conservative feeling found its funnel mainly through organized religions, and addressed itself chiefly to social questions—for Prohibition, say, and against liberalizing divorce laws—that were only secondarily political. There has also been much special pleading, "the business of America is business," that sort of thing. But the first represents social caution, the second vested interest, and neither, by any stretch of the political imagination, is worthy of the name of conservatism.

"The very word 'conservatism' has a peculiarly un-American ring about it." That sentence comes not from an American and not from a radical but from Mr. Peregrine

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Worsthorne, an English political writer who is a self-avowed Tory. Speaking as a conservative, with wholly conservative ends in mind—the enemy for Mr. Worsthorne is socialism—his thoughts on American conservatism (originally uttered over the BBC under the title "What Is American Conservatism?) repay attention:

> The very word "conservatism" has a peculiarly un-American ring about it. The United States is a country associated in our minds with change, with overtaking the future rather than preserving the past. True, the New World has a tradition to conserve—but it is an overwhelmingly liberal tradition. There have always been, and still are, plenty of Americans, particularly in New England and the South, who do have aristocratic yearnings, who deplore, on social and even intellectual grounds, the open society. But these frustrated yearnings are essentially those of a middle class attempting, somewhat guiltily and self-consciously, to escape from a dominating egalitarian background. The fact that these would-be aristocrats model themselves so closely on Old World intellectual attitudes and social customs suggests that they find little to their taste at home in the United States.

America, Worsthorne's argument runs, never having gone through a feudal phase, has from the beginning provided an infertile soil for conservatism. Without feudalism, there was no straitjacket of caste or class, no rigid heritage of long-standing privilege to conserve. Conservatism in Europe came into being as a reaction to forces that threatened to do away with almost all aspects of social organization as it was then known; Robespierre was a serious enemy to those who felt comfortable in an established place. How different things have been in America, which has never known a strong conservative tradition, nor even towering reactionaries like Joseph de Maistre, but instead (fortunately) only such bush-league figures as Father Coughlin and Joseph McCarthy, whose movements represented not conservatism but, as Worsthorne puts it, "the ever latent intolerance of an overwhelmingly liberal society." For it is a mistake not to distinguish between capitalism and conservatism. Carnegie, Rockefeller, Vanderbilt, Henry Ford, the great American capitalists—men who transformed a continent, revolutionized the habits of other men, and had no great reverence for the past—hardly qualify as conservatives. With democracy, egalitarianism, and individualism the dominant traditions in the United States—"The American," as Tocqueville noted, "was born free without having to become so"—Worsthorne goes so far as to conclude that he believes that Edmund Burke, had he been born an American, would probably have been a liberal. "He would surely have recognized, unlike his American disciples, that the unifying liberal tradition in which the American system is rooted could all too easily be endangered by a conservative movement: that a conservative movement, in short, would be likely to have profoundly unconservative consequences."

To Worsthorne, these "profoundly unconservative consequences" would mean a hardening of class lines, with a privileged business class on top and a coherent class of workers at the bottom rallied around a socialist party, which would destroy the partnership between capitalism, however mixed, and democracy, however imperfect, and eventually lead America to socialism. Worsthorne concludes: "That conservatives should risk destroying something that has worked so well in the past is peculiar, to say the least. But then American conservatives are very peculiar: they are in truth the real American radicals."

To those who do not fear socialism so much as Peregrine Worsthorne, even to those the name of whose dream is socialism, the likely consequences of a strong conservative movement dominated by the *National Review* mentality still seem a dread nightmare. To determine why this should be so it is necessary to inquire briefly into the

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nature of conservative thought in America as represented by Buckley in the 1970s.

What is American conservatism, as Buckley understands it? Apparently he does not understand it all that clearly, or if he does he is unable to bring to his understanding the same concision he brings to his notion of liberalism. (A case, surely, of one's own thought always being more complicated than the other fellow's.) In his most ambitious effort at formulating a definition, "Notes Toward an Empirical Definition of Conservatism," he remarks: "I have never failed . . . to dissatisfy an audience that asks the meaning of conservatism." The empirical definition toward which he struggles turns out to be mainly negative. He tells us what contemporary American conservatism is not. For the most part, the exercise comes to little more than a chasing of nuts back into the nut house. American conservatism is not, as Buckley and the other editors of *National Review* understand it, Ayn Rand's Objectivism; it is not simply antistatism, nor definable by any single political nostrum; it is not John Birchism, as expounded in the writings of Robert Welch; it need not exclude people who are nonreligious, though its philosophical roots seem to be planted in a religious view of man. Buckley concludes these less than satisfactory notes by remarking of conservatism in America: "The freeway remains large, large enough to accommodate very different players with highly different prejudices and techniques. The differences are now tonal, now substantive, but they do not appear to be choking each other off. The symbiosis may yet be a general consensus on the proper balance between freedom, order, and tradition."

But then Buckley has always been most successful as a counterpuncher, being of an almost wholly polemical intelligence, and least impressive as a theoretician. He is, however, a workaday journalist and a quondam politician, and these of his activities provide a much clearer sense of what his particular brand of conservatism is about. Dealing with the issues of the day and forged under the pressure of deadlines, they exhibit, so to say, his conservatism in action.

Buckley is, for example, antistatist, affirming that the state ought to stay out of people's lives as much as possible—"this side of anarchy," as he has put it. Yet he also has been a hawk in Vietnam until quite late in the day, and remains a hard-liner in foreign policy, and so is willing to grant the state's need for manpower and large defense expenditures to maintain national security. In other words, his hatred of Communism is greater than his hatred of the state. Fair enough. Yet is it not also fair to inquire why his hatred of the state is not greater than his hatred of poverty among the citizens of his own country, whose number is surely large? Why not? Is it unreasonable to assume that the two evils, the threat of Communism abroad and the existence of large numbers of poor at home, are both worthy of jettisoning a theoretical position? One can, and perhaps Buckley would, argue that the two evils are not equally urgent; that Communism poses a more urgent threat than domestic poverty. And he would be perfectly correct—so long as one doesn't happen to be poor. What seems to be involved is that in the first instance he feels unable to "afford" his antistatist purity, while in the second he is able to "afford" it.

Of course, Buckley might well rejoin that, far from not caring about abolishing poverty, he cares very much indeed, and that is why he advocates the free economy. Apart from the deliberate ignorance of historical evidence implicit in such an argument—the New Deal, after all, did not come about because of an abstract penchant for social experimentation, but precisely because Buckley's much-lauded free economy proved itself incapable of pulling the nation out of the dark hole of Depression in which, largely unregulated, it had plunged it in the first place—the consequences of Buckley's specific proposals for abolishing poverty seem cal-

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culated at least as much to exacerbate poverty as to relieve it. As recently as 1969, for example, he proposed that the "government can be useful by repealing the minimum wage laws which have drastically adverse effects on the marginally employed. . . ." The theory here is that a lower wage would make it possible to employ more, say, black teenagers. But repealing the minimum wage seems every bit as likely to have the ultimate effect instead of reducing the wages of many of their parents.

In this connection, it is worth inquiring about how far Buckley would carry his antistatism. Does he wish to dismantle all the accomplishments of the New Deal, or does he instead merely oppose any further extension of them? The answer is not easily got at in Buckley's writing. He can, for example, write: "We [American conservatives] must indeed continue to cherish our resentments against such institutionalized impositions upon our prerogatives as social security." But Buckley does not waste much time cherishing them in public these days. (It would have been interesting to discover how many votes he might have won if the main feature of his New York mayoral campaign had been the abolition of social security!) Instead, half ideologue, half practical politician, he pecks away at existing government programs, everywhere insisting that "private arrangements" are best. Here he is on poverty: "To give to the poor because the poor cannot otherwise make do is one thing. To give to the poor merely because they are poorer than you is, by conservative standards, something you should do on your own behalf, not on your own and also your neighbors'." He never comes out and asks that welfare be done away with, but merely maintains that it can be drastically cut back, liberally (conservatively?) mixing his actual proposals with much sneering talk about "incontinent mothers," people "who cannot be persuaded even to flush their own toilets," and "relocating chronic welfare cases outside the city limits."

The overall Buckley strategy, then, is to oppose any extension of government into such areas of national concern as welfare, housing, wage control, etc., while reserving the right to detest (to "cherish" resentments) those incursions government has already made without pressing unduly for the destruction of the most popular among them—social security, the enforcement of safe working conditions, pure food and drug standards, and so on. Clearly, Buckley's is the case of a man keeping his ideological purity and his constituency, too.

Directly linked with Buckley's antistatism are the many claims, scattered throughout his journalism, that American conservatives are libertarian. Of what, precisely, does this libertarianism consist? "There is, to begin with," Buckley wrote in 1966, "the preservation of liberty. The conservatives take the position that an increase in the state's power involves a necessary decrease in the individual's freedom, while the liberals rejoin that such freedoms as the individual has lost are insubstantial—indeed, that no basic liberties are seriously infringed today." As a matter of fact, nearly the opposite has been true, and within recent years—certainly in the past two decades—it has been predominantly the Left, despite the disregard of the wilder segments of the New Left, and not the Right that was most concerned with libertarian issues. Whittaker Chambers recognized this, and suggested to Buckley that the time had come for the Right "to examine and define with a special scrupulousness the civil liberties field. . . . Why, for example, should we leave it to the Liberals to give tongue against the frightening developments in wire-tapping—though that is much too crude a term for the refinements which science is introducing in this practice which the Right has even more reason to fear than the Left?"

The Left has been more vigilant in libertarian matters not because it is the respository of virtue in America, but more likely for the more concrete reason that, apart from

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gangsters, it has been the civil liberties of people on the Left that have been more aggressively violated in recent years. The tendency has been for the Right to remain silent about these violations, as perhaps the Left might, too, if it were people on the Right who had their homes bugged and their telephones tapped. No one, meanwhile, either on the Left or the Right, seems excessively concerned about protecting the civil liberties of alleged gangsters. So much for the Right's libertarian virtue.

In the related area of civil rights, Buckley's record has been less than glorious. His original ploy was to deplore the erosion of state's rights while offering up such fudging declarations as that segregation "is a problem that should be solved not by the central government, but locally—in the states—and in the hearts of men." When this caved in, the next strategy, again reflected in Buckley's journalism, has been apathy, where it hasn't been direct resistance to change, and in both cases accompanied by a quickness to point out rhetorical excesses on the part of black civil rights leaders.

Buckley clearly prides himself on being a careful custodian of language and a man quick to point out the failure of the Left to make important distinctions, yet he can distort language and blur distinctions with the best of them, and especially has this been so in regard to civil rights. During his mayoral campaign in New York City, for example, Buckley rather sloppily linked Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. and Bayard Rustin as, among others, responsible for a white backlash against special pleading for the Negro. To anyone with even the foggiest notion of the civil rights movement, the differences between Powell and Rustin are staggeringly great. Whatever function he may have served the collective psyche of Harlem, Powell was always something of an opportunist and toward the end of his life a wholly irresponsible figure, while Rustin has been an insistent advocate of nonviolence, was the first to urge that the civil rights movement shift its priorities from protest to politics, and has gone on record as saying, "I reject the idea of working for the Negro as being impractical as well as immoral if one does that alone" (in Robert Penn Warren's *Who Speaks for the Negro?* [1965]). Linking the two men together as Buckley did was an act quite without respect for distinction, and on the same level of political discourse as referring to "Robert Welch, Bill Buckley, and the Right."

During his mayoral campaign in New York the charge was made time and again that Buckley was a racist, and in *The Unmaking of a Mayor* (1966), his account of that campaign, he argues time and again against the charge. Although there is a good deal of truth to Dick Schaap's remark apropos of Buckley's candidacy that "the reasoning behind his arguments make sense only to people who cannot understand a word he says," the tag of racist has been tossed around altogether too freely over the past ten years to place on a man unless the evidence against him is blatant. The evidence against Buckley is not blatant. What the evidence does unmistakably show, however, is Buckley's unrelieved absence of sympathy with black aspirations, even in their most respectable form. The acid test is Martin Luther King, Jr., and Buckley fails it miserably.

This is exhibited in high relief in a slight piece Buckley published on October 7, 1969, entitled "A Memorial for Dr. King." Dr. King, wrote Buckley, was a martyr and a hero in one respect. "In others—one thinks of his celebration of civil disobedience—he was the spokesmen for a point of view on citizenship which in the opinion of some—e.g., me—is mortal to civil society." Now comes the cruncher: *"Dr. King's discovery of the transcendent rights of the individual conscience is the kind of thing that killed Jim Crow all right. But it is also the kind of*

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thing that killed Bobby Kennedy." (Italics added.)

Rub your eyes and consider those two sentences a moment longer. Can Buckley be saying what he seems to be saying—that Martin Luther King, Jr. was in some not altogether indirect way responsible for the death of Robert F. Kennedy? Is he not equating King's actions in the Montgomery bus boycott, at Selma, in Birmingham, in Washington, and all across the South with Sirhan Sirhan's action in the kitchen of the Los Angeles Ambassador Hotel? All these, he is saying, were acts of individual conscience by men who believed their consciences transcended the laws of civil society. But the implications extend further. Leaving aside as Buckley conveniently does Dr. King's unflagging allegiance to nonviolence, which from the beginning was at the center of his moral authority, King, he implies, was killed by an act of civil disobedience. So, too, was Robert Kennedy, who not merely befriended King but refused to eschew his doctrine of civil disobedience, killed by an act of civil disobedience. The conclusion is inescapable—both men in some rough sense got what they deserved.

Throughout his writing Buckley sets himself up as a man whose thought proceeds out of a solid body of conservative principle, with logic his constant companion, truth his only concern. More often than not, however, his ideas are formed out of reaction to liberal-left opinion. Take, for example, Spiro Agnew. In defending Agnew, Buckley's standard seems to be that if the man is so despised on the Left, well, how bad can he be? Thus he writes: "There is a view, and I share it, that in Mr. Agnew, Nixon found a high deposit of some of the best American ore lying around: toughness, sincerity, decent-mindedness, decisiveness—much of what, after a fair amount of exposure, went into making Harry Truman a relatively happy national memory." The comparison with Truman is interesting. In *Up From Liberalism* (1959) Buckley wrote of Truman: "I sat in the spring of 1958 before the television screen and beheld Mr. Truman, with the zest he had for that kind of thing, cavorting from vulgarity to vulgarity, oversimplifying issues, distorting history, questioning motives, provoking base appetites." A relatively happy national memory? For a conservative Buckley's own memory seems unusually short.

When dealing with issues, as opposed to personalities, Buckley is more concerned with what he construes to be economic efficiency than with social justice. He is essentially an Adam Smith got up in Edmund Burke's prose. As a Smithite, his program seems thin. He would reform the tax system, delegate larger and larger shares of economic activity to the private sector, remove the minimum wage, and above all bust up the power of the labor unions, which he almost invariably refers to as "the monopolistic labor unions." It isn't much, but there it is, causing the *Wall Street Journal* (May 3, 1972), after praising Buckley for his skill at debate, to remark:

> Yet so often those who claim the word conservative are not followers of Burke but of Adam Smith. So often you find not skepticism about rationalist reformers, but the prescription of laissez-faire not merely as a marvelously efficient economic device but as a cure for the ills of society. So often you find not the thought that other nations must work out their own systems even if we know ours are better, but an apocalyptic anti-Communism. So often we find conservatives stressing not the protection and preservation of the American mainstream, but opposition to it.

In recent years Buckley's conservatism has undergone some changes, the most useful of which, from the conservative agitprop point of view, have been partially ceded to conservatism by the Left. Buckley himself has noted the main changes in an essay entitled "The New Conservatism." "I see it

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as the historical role of the new conservatives not to abandon their traditional concerns," he writes, "but to accept the necessity of gut affirmations respecting America's way of doing things, some of which were traditionally espoused by the liberals and the progressives, whose contemporary uncertainty about them . . . imposes special burdens on the conservatives." Specifically, these burdens are three: defense of the democratic process; defense of due process; and concern about upward mobility.

Conceding that the defense of the democratic process was not formerly felt to be a principal responsibility of conservatives, Buckley remarks that it has now become so, largely through forfeiture on the part of a large segment on the Left who confuse democratic process with mob rule (e.g., students demanding the right to elect their own university president). The same generally applies to due process, where the impatience of radicals has rendered both the campus representatives of Dow Chemical and the Jewish delicatessen owner in Harlem equally fair targets of vandalism and violence in the name of politics. The point about upward mobility is more complicated, but it is true that conservatives do offer some solutions to the problem of eliminating poverty, however wrong-headed or incomplete one may think them (repealing the minimum wage, say, or destroying antiblack discrimination in certain labor unions), while the Left seems both confused and fatigued nearly to the point of impasse on the problem of poverty.

The irony is that significant elements of the New Left, by acquiescing in the destruction of the highest values of democratic radicalism (belief in the central importance of the democratic process, hatred of violence, and ardent concern for bringing about an equality of material conditions), have practically driven William F. Buckley, Jr. into respectability. Given a debate that chooses between Buckley and Eldridge Cleaver, some people might argue that there isn't much to choose from, but as long as Cleaver offers up such guidelines for social reform as "take your guns and shoot judges and police," Buckley suddenly looks very good indeed. Next to the madness of a Cleaver or to the buffoonery of an Abbie Hoffman, Buckley comes to seem sane. Sane he is, but sanity is not quite the same as political wisdom, and, as Buckley would be the first to concede, his ideas on fundamental questions have undergone no serious alteration.

Intact is his hard-lining foreign policy. Intact is his rigid faith in beneficence of the free enterprise system. Intact is his utter inability to understand either the passion or the objective need for social justice. Intact, though now somewhat muted, is the desire, if not actually to dismantle, then certainly not to extend much of what the New Deal has bequeathed of an incomplete welfare state. Behind his resistance to social change, his hatred of the unions, his advocacy of the free market, his nearly complete absence of sympathy for minority-group aspirations is the desire to keep things in America pretty much as they are. If Buckley can be said to have any single message, that message is: let's continue to keep things as tilted as possible in favor of the privileged.

How different the style is from the message, and, make no mistake about it, it has been Buckley's style much more than his message that is responsible for his celebrity. Among people with his particular set of ideas, Buckley is apparently the only one fit for public (that is, television) consumption. William A. Rusher, the publisher of *National Review,* used to appear on television a good deal, but, though his ideas and sentiments are in every essential way similar to Buckley's, Rusher commands none of Buckley's dashing verbal sword play. Compact and emotionally intense, quick to take umbrage at anything that even smacks of a liberal idea, Mr. Rusher seems more of a garrotte man. Watching him on television,

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one could scarcely avoid the uncomfortable feeling of sitting before the desk of a bank officer who had just foreclosed on your mortgage because you were one day late with your final payment. James Jackson Kilpatrick, a Southern journalist who is another conservative of the Buckleyite persuasion, appears on television a goodly amount, but with nothing like the same effect as Buckley. Though articulate and giving less the impression of mercilessness than Mr. Rusher, Mr. Kilpatrick's problem is that he is an older man, has a Southern accent, and comes across rather too stodgily, and thus both sounds and looks too much like a conservative; in Mr. Kilpatrick's case, the casting has been all too predictable.

No, America has room for only one Favorite Conservative, and William F. Buckley, Jr. is his name. Given the thinness, even at times the meanness, of his ideas, what, exactly, is the big attraction? How, in other words, did Buckley come by his celebrity? Three main factors seem to me to have been involved: a certain inherent snobbery and aristocratic yearning in America at large, which finds its strongest expression in a hunger for style; a particular conception, essentially liberal in its origins, of what constitutes political dialogue; and finally Buckley's own very genuine, if somewhat special, talent.

The Irish, Andrew Greeley has said, make the best fake WASPs. There is more than a modicum of truth to the notion. Henry James, F. Scott Fitzgerald, the Kennedys, the Buckleys, Irishmen all, all have been possessed by deep aristocratic yearnings. James and Fitzgerald had the sensibility to back up these yearnings; the Kennedys and the Buckleys have had the energy and the cash to do the same. Far from being accounted appalling for its pretentiousness, for most people the phenomenon is appealing and indeed even assuring. It offers living proof that in America there is little that money can't buy, including breeding. Acquire enough cash, place your children in the right schools, and, who can say, you, too, may have a U.S. president or senator in the family.

Unlike the Kennedys, whose political roots were in the Democratic party, thus rendering the family in effect the People's aristocrats, the Buckley family, or at least William F., Jr., makes no concession to the bloody lower (or even the bloody middle) classes. In cultural tastes, in manner, in accent, Buckley comes on unrestrainedly upper class, with a slight admixture of jet-set swingingness provided by his interest in rock music and by the motor scooter on which he used to travel about Manhattan. Never condescending to being a regular guy, nor one to poor-mouth in any way, he is, irretrievably, young (though now slightly aging) Lord Buckley, and the folks seem to eat it up.

Which folks? Not necessarily those one might think. Buckley's constituency would seem to be comprised of the following elements: those who share his faith in free enterprise or in the need for a continued Cold War posture; those, mainly of the white middle and lower-middle class, who, though unlikely to have intellectual access to his high style, sense that he gives eloquent expression to their extreme impatience with militant blacks, wild kids, and the pacifist-welfare-permissive strain of liberalism. Also those students, whose numbers are not known, who find him attractive for a variety of reasons: his position on issues is never ambiguous, he has courage in debate, his conservatism offers the only radical-minority political orientation on campuses otherwise dominated by liberal-radical student bodies.

Excepting only the students, none of these groups comprises anything like an intellectual constituency; and, including the students, none of them is capable of conferring celebrity of the kind Buckley has acquired. In the main Buckley's chief constituency, at once his audience and the group most responsible for his current renown, is none other than American liberals. His books are draped by blurbs from such liberals as

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Murray Kempton and John Kenneth Galbraith; the viewers of his television program, "The Firing Line," are surely not homeowners worried about a Negro moving on the block but college graduates, numbers of whom read the *New Republic,* the *Saturday Review,* and the *Nation.* They are not at all taken in by his content, or so they will tell you, but it is nonetheless clear that they are completely captivated by his style.

Considering Buckley's mayoral campaign in New York, Michael Harrington wrote that Buckley emerged as "an urbane front man for the most primitive and vicious emotions in the land"—meaning, of course, that when all the rhetoric and delicate phrasing had been stripped away, Buckley's gut appeal in the campaign was directed to those citizens of New York whose minds were dominated by fear, hatred, and an utter impatience with further attempts to improve the condition of the city's most poorly-off people. Murray Kempton, reviewing *The Unmaking of a Mayor,* Buckley's account of that same campaign, has this to say:

> He has never been better. Just having an experience has made him widely entertaining. His sense of comedy rode triumphantly through a process which turns most men into sodden lumps. His understanding that comedy must be serious provides us with many cranky but unexpectedly useful reflections on the New York ordeal. There is nothing like low company to bring out the high style.

Whether one agrees or disagrees with Harrington's appraisal—I, for one, agree with it—the fact is that Harrington is at least talking about the content of Buckley's campaign. Murray Kempton is talking about something else—not politics but the aesthetics of politics, for which he awards Buckley the highest marks.

Buckley did not always receive such high marks. On January 31, 1962, on one of his first major television appearances, he was ill-treated on "The Tonight Show" by its then-host, Jack Paar. At the end of his interview, Paar said to him: "I think you're sincere in what you believe; for me, Bill, you lack all feeling for people; and in the things I read I find no feeling for humanity." It was a very unpleasant moment; and what made it so unpleasant was not merely that one man had been supremely rude to another before an audience of millions of people—that, surely, was bad enough—but that he had been so because he didn't like his opinions. Something deeper than a regard for decent manners was violated that evening; a man was penalized by contemptible treatment because of the views he held, and that, given the liberal atmosphere of America, was deemed intolerable. Paar supposedly received hundreds of telegrams protesting his rudeness to Buckley. The event may have been the making of Buckley's career as a celebrity intellectual.

As we are a nation that has prospered and (except for the Civil War) maintained its equilibrium through the political instrument of compromise, it is perhaps not surprising that there has long been a belief in America that no two views are finally irreconcilable. Robert Hutchins lent this belief intellectual status when he termed it, with characteristic grandiosity, "the dialogue." Ideally, in the dialogue every shade of opinion short of madness has a right to a hearing, and, though cacophony might for a time appear to rule, a symphonic blending of ideas and opinions

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To Contributors

Like other periodicals, we have asked for stamped self-addressed envelopes with submitted articles but sometimes have returned them when such envelopes weren't included. The cost of doing so has become prohibitive, and we have to announce that from now on we will not return any manuscript unless it comes with a stamped self-addressed envelope.

THE EDITORS

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will emerge, providing sweet background music as we ascend the stairway to truth. This is of course the sheerest nonsense, some ideas and opinions being much worthier of serious consideration than others; but the belief appears to be widely held, especially among well-intentioned liberals. It was the belief in the dialogue, essentially, that Jack Paar trampled on so rudely, and it is the same belief that has given Buckley his place in American life.

Television has its own, even more vulgar notion of the dialogue. Its notion is to get two people together in the same room who couldn't agree on anything, turn on the cameras, and hope that some fur will fly. The wilder the opinions, the greater the divergency of points of view, the better—or, which is much the same thing, the higher the ratings. "Well, Stokely," I prize the memory of a Chicago talk show host named Irv Kupcinet once saying to Stokely Carmichael, "at this point we'll break for a commercial, and then get right back to just why it is you think America is doomed."

Given these standards, Buckley wonderfully fills the bill. He really comes across best on television, although he can also be a smooth performer in prose, when he is not straining for baroque effects. (E.g., "Robert F. Kennedy had a way of saying things loosely, and it may be that that is among the reasons why so many people invested so much idealism in him, it being in the idealistic [as distinguished from the analytic] mode to make large and good-sounding generalities, like the generality he spoke on April 5, after the assassination of Martin Luther King, two months exactly before his own assassination.")

For one thing, as a television performer, Buckley is absolutely predictable—which means that his views will be predictably far to the right of whomever he is debating with. For another, he has an instinct for an opponent's weakness—an instinct, that is, for the intellectual jugular—so that there is always a good chance that intellectual bloodletting will result. Finally, there is something inherently fascinating about his very performance, his tics, his mannerisms, his diction, his high academic style—all placed in the service of views that are mainly difficult to distinguish from those of Spiro Agnew. The closest analogy to Buckley's television persona is that of that stock movie character, also inherently fascinating, the highly cultivated gangster who keeps an art collection, has impeccable taste, remarks on how he "abhors violence," but can be ruthless nonetheless.

So sure-fire is Buckley's television performance that, when it came time to decide on how to cover the 1968 Republican Convention in Miami and the Democratic Convention in Chicago, the American Broadcasting Company hired Buckley as a commentator on both conventions and to play him off against a liberal commentator. As an ABC executive put it:

> We knew we wanted Buckley because we were well familiar with him. . . . It was a question of who would best play off against him. We considered a number of people and some did "auditions," sort of surreptitiously, that is, watching people on the air without them knowing we were watching them. It looked as though Buckley would play better with [Gore] Vidal than any of four or five other people.

Buckley had earlier had some ugly television encounters with Vidal, and informed ABC he would rather not go on television with him again. But Vidal was ABC's choice, and Buckley, doubtless not wanting to lose an enormous audience, went along.

Well, everyone knows what happened. The politics of kicks, as Irving Howe has described the phenomenon of political discourse when drained of content and judged solely as aesthetic excitement, have never been kickier. The spectacle was a grand one: night after night two Eustace Tilleys, each of somewhat dessicated patrician style and of implacably opposed points of view, each look-

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ing down his nose at the other, and letting the insults fly. Then in Chicago, in the middle of a garbled discussion on Vietnam, the poison came oozing out of both men:

> VIDAL: As far as I am concerned, the only crypto Nazi I can think of is yourself, failing that, I would only say that we can't have . . .
>
> HOWARD K. SMITH: Now let's not call names.
>
> BUCKLEY: Now listen, you queer. Stop calling me a crypto Nazi or I'll sock you in your goddam face and you'll stay plastered——
>
> SMITH: Gentlemen! Gentlemen! Let's not call names.

That night the dialogue in America reached its splendid culmination.

The style, it used to be said with some confidence—by, among others, Dwight Macdonald—is the message, meaning that the way something is said is every bit as important as what is being said. Aesthetic judgment, this line of reasoning runs, is inextricably bound up with, if not indivisible from, moral judgment. A nice point, or so it once seemed. Not any longer, however. If the last ten years can be said to have taught any lesson whatever, surely it is that few things are more dangerous than to apply aesthetic criteria to political and intellectual matters. Because such criteria ruled supreme over the past decade, the sixties, which started out leftward, ended up wayward. Political and intellectual life took on the quality of a boutique, whose main design was the avoidance of boredom. The results were unmistakable: the mainstream of the civil rights movement all but crumbled and the Black Panthers became American martyrs; the redistribution of national income became a less absorbing subject than the effects of marijuana; migrant workers, Appalachians, and the urban poor lived the same miserable lives they had for as long as anyone could remember, but suddenly it was announced that middle-class women and homosexuals were the truly insulted and injured of America; the aged died in neglect and loneliness while the idealistic young declared that the universities were totalitarian institutions. William F. Buckley, Jr., Abbie Hoffman, and Eldridge Cleaver, all of whom rose to fame during this period, shared one quality: for a time at least, none of them was boring. Somewhere along the line, the American train jumped the main rail, and across its engine was emblazoned the word "STYLE."

Style has its uses, but they are scarcely all salutary. Harnessed to energy, intellectual skills, and political ambition, as they are in Buckley, style can hurtle a man into a prominence out of all proportion to the significance of his ideas. At a time when the abiding intellectual sin is to be boring, Buckley has risen to the rank of the paramount celebrity intellectual. He can be entertaining, no question about that, but at a price. The price is that as long as he and his ideas are preeminently identified with American conservatism, a more serious conservatism—one that respects the traditions and values of the past and combines this respect with decency and a genuine regard for reform of a kind that amounts to more than merely setting back the clock—has little chance of gaining a hearing in America. With William F. Buckley, Jr. you get style aplenty, but it would be well to remember that in his case the style most emphatically ain't the message. □

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Samuel Hux

Liberal Education and Radical Values

The university as a preserve of the wealthy, the relatively privileged, and a scattering of symbolic scholarship cases is a thing of the past. Mass higher education, so long merely a dream (a nightmare for some), becomes a sounder theoretical possibility and in some schools a literal fact. Now a different kind of student body is here, a student body liberals and radicals have long said they wished to see. Mixed in with those youths we have loosely called the culturally privileged are large numbers we have called the culturally deprived—blacks, "ethnics," working-class students. I do not mean they aren't deprived; romanticism about the culture of poverty and blocked social advancement is destructive, a form of seemingly benign condescension. But for the moment: a different kind of student at last. How do we respond? How should we respond?

What seems increasingly clear is that we are not responding with anything like the traditional view of university education at its best: the belief that whatever its commitment to professional training, the intellectual commitment of the university should be to ensure an intelligible present and, hopefully, an intelligent future by keeping the achievements and failures of the past available to the mind. It can hardly be said that this is how we respond; indeed, the assumption grows that we should not. On occasion one might hear that "he who does not understand the past is condemned to repeat the past"; but the number of occasions diminish. Listen closely enough—not least within the university—and you will hear also that knowledge of the past is irrelevant or, worse, that it is a positive hindrance to a real grappling with the present: it directs one's attention away from where things really are at. That latter sentiment is often presented with a vulgarity of mind that allows one to claim Marx as an ally—"the philosophers hitherto have only interpreted the world in various ways: the thing is, however, to change it" —distorting this sentence to mean that one need not interpret in order to change, certainly not interpret historically. Occasional rhetorical pieties about the past barely veil a dismissal of history as a serious discipline. History (both the events and the discipline), we believe, has failed us. After all, it promised so much. We Americans can be a childish lot; we heard that commonplace to mean, "he who does understand the past is assured not to repeat it"—a lazy view that assures foolishness and petulance when the debt is called. And the irony, of course, is that indignation at being betrayed by history is itself a historical repetition.

The dismissal of history is accompanied by a distrust of aesthetic and intellectual cultivation gained from intercourse with the past. One now expects a "knowing" and impatient response to such words as the conclusion of Allen Guttmann's *The Conservative Tradition in America:*

> We cannot be easy at the thought of a generation unmoved by the world of the Greek *polis,* uninterested in the Biblical myths that

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were more real to the American Puritans than the wilderness they lived in, bored by Shakespeare, blind to Michelangelo, and deaf to Mozart.

But impatience with such a remark is not justified. The possible tone of a tongue-clucking Tory looking down on barbarian youth is simply not there; and the shared admission that "we cannot be easy . . ." in no way assumes that an older generation was not for the most part also unmoved, uninterested, bored, blind, and deaf. The "We" Guttmann refers to are not the conservatives he writes about, but the adherents to a "socialism with a sense of the past" which he desires. His uneasiness, and the intellectual commitment I mentioned in the beginning, need not be a function only in a socialist or radical view of higher education—but, given the demographic revolution occurring in higher education today, it should be especially meaningful to socialists and radicals.

To say that college was there in the past for the privileged and for a few bright underprivileged is, in the United States, to say that the Greek *polis,* Shakespeare, Mozart were there for the privileged and a few bright underprivileged. This is not to idealize the American college, but to face some facts about the general relationship between society and "culture" in this nation. The university is much more the primary repository of the past in the United States than it is in Europe. No matter how many the faults and corruptions of the university, the fact remains that this is where the past generally has resided or, rather, a coherent and articulated conception of it. To beg a phrase for a moment, that is where, for the most part, High Culture has been available for one to grasp or not.

THIS IS MY POINT: the masses of people have fairly consistently been cut off from a coherent knowledge and appreciation of the cultural achievements of the past, to say nothing of the present. (Must we assume they would use their book shelves merely to store coal?) Now that they are beginning to enter the universities in significantly large numbers, the universities are beginning to change their definitions of higher education in such a way as to cut them off again.

And this is, significantly, not some sort of right-wing conspiracy, but a movement supported and to a large degree initiated by people who demand the description radical, and in some cases even deserve it.

When Engels wrote *Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844,* he made an assumption that is evidently suspect today. "The Socialists, especially," he wrote, "have done wonders for the education of the proletariat"—he cited translations of continental writers, the circulation of such English poets as Shelley and Byron, such bourgeois radicals as Bentham and Godwin; to the point where they are "almost exclusively the property of the proletariat." The assumption that is suspect is not the claimed extension of literary culture to the proletariat—Engels was obviously carried away by enthusiasm—but the notion that the education of the masses in intellectual and literary culture is a radical act, an endeavor a radical movement should take pride in. That notion strikes many as silly today. But before I can argue that this is a state of affairs a radical should abhor, I should clarify a few points.

High Culture, or Western Civilization—none of these familiar terms is completely satisfactory, for all suggest postures of class sophistication and cultural exclusiveness. The Intellectual Heritage is little better; it begs the question, for the simple fact is that much in The Tradition is flatly *not* inherited by us and never has been except, simple-mindedly, as "something an educated person ought to know about." And Tradition too, of course, is suspect. I do not know how to avoid such terms; and in truth I do not think we should avoid—only clarify. For behind the out-of-hand rejection, so popular today, is the prejudice that "tradition" is uninteresting to

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irrelevant, a more than passing concern for it quaint to reactionary, and respect for it an unconditional endorsement—none of which I buy. I settle on The Tradition. But I do not mean by that simply the existence and knowledge of Sophocles, Galileo, Bach, Rembrandt, Mann, Marx, Burke, the Civil War, and the Jannisaries. That's the raw stuff; tradition is something active.

G. Roush (in "What Will Become of the Past?" *Daedalus,* vol. 98, no. 3) writes of two kinds of tradition, which are more than collections of things nice to know: the "syncretic" and the "dialectical." "In a syncretic tradition," he writes, "the past is important as a linear succession that we should be able to retrace to our roots." Such a tradition is exclusive of much—too much in fact; it tends to portray history as a kind of controlled advance, and it is the kind of tradition the university has more often than not subscribed to. Its tendency, pushed far enough, is apologetics. In the dialectical view, however,

> one participates in a tradition not as a discoverer but as an artist whose one final truth is his own and for which he is accountable to the past but in his own way. Whereas a syncretic tradition tends to submerge differences, a dialectical tradition seeks out differences, plays with them, and demands that men make choices between them. . . . [In] a dialectical tradition, the past is a home for one set of loving protagonists who can inspire, correct, or be corrected or rejected by us. A dialectical tradition is not so much a history as a mode of social behavior, an *agon.*

I am indebted again to Professor Roush for a passage from Whitman's *Democratic Vistas,* which he quotes after observing that the dialectical kind of tradition "has proved especially congenial to Americans."

> Ye powerful and resplendent ones! Ye were, in your atmospheres, grown not for America but rather for her foes, the feudal and the old—while our genius is democratic and modern. Yet could ye, indeed, but breathe your breath of life into our New World's nostrils—not to enslave us, as now, but for our needs, to breed a spirit like your own—perhaps (dare we to say it?) to dominate, even destroy what you yourselves have left!

I cannot subscribe exclusively to a dialectical view of tradition, for pushed far enough it excludes as much as the syncretic. A view of the past as linear succession from our roots might exclude too many figures and events, but an exclusively dialectical view—tradition as an *agon,* figures from the past inspiring or correcting us, being corrected or rejected by us—might only underline that prejudice already epidemic in colleges: the final measure of anything is Me in this very Here And Now. That is the temporal provincialism of the young. I would rather subscribe to a more dynamic view, for I do not think the syncretic and dialectical are ultimately sensible without one another. If we are dialectically engaged with a figure from the past, it is still true that this figure has been made available to us by a syncretic tradition; that is, we meet him as we are retracing a cultural succession "to our roots." And even when one is involved in an apparently syncretic view of the past —say, Plato leading to Aristotle—he is observing at the same time Aristotle dialectically responding to Plato. Within a syncretic view there is a dialectical experience; within a dialectical view, a syncretic experience. A study of tradition implies both views. But is this tradition so valuable that to be cut off from it is truly a deprivation? I shall be more pointed later on, but for now, a few comments.

There is a matter of *enjoyment* that one can hardly talk about except personally. Suffice it to say that some people enjoy observing the intricate ways the Roman Empire, seated in Rome, gradually becomes the Holy Roman Empire, a collection of German states with some non-Teutonic fringes; that some delight in Sophocles and would even if *Antigone* had no contemporary political relevance. Then there is a matter of *respect*

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(confused by so many with servility), the capacity to celebrate something of value that has lasted. We are taught (not that it takes) to respect our parents and such a man as Edison, but in both cases we have a concrete debt: we exist and we have electric lights. But what of respect for achievement that does not bear directly on us and is therefore not obvious and easily felt? Sometimes one is inclined to declaim to Americans (not just students): "Come let us mock at the great/That had such burdens on the mind/And toiled so hard and late/To leave some monument behind,/Nor thought of the levelling wind." Finally there is a matter of *necessity,* usually unrecognized. Provincials survive as provincials, if at all. It is not difficult to argue that a man should know of more than his neighborhood, a society of more than its boundaries. People will recognize that the quality of even the deepest Appalachian mountaineer's life is affected by what goes on beyond the hills, whether he knows of it or not, and if he knows nothing of it he is helpless to control it in the least. But it is more difficult to argue (and remarkable that one should have to) that we live in temporal geographies as well, surrounded by past and future in this present, and ignorance of that temporal space can be an equally crippling form of provincialism.

I think there *is* a tradition, that intercourse with it is a positive value, and that it is in danger of being effectively shunted aside in the university as far as the new student is concerned. The shunting aside is often a particular kind of curriculum "reform." I would like to identify that kind of reform and suggest some of its political implications.

Varieties of "Relevance"

IN ESSENCE this reform party says: "It's doubtful that more than an incidental concern with the past, the 'cultural tradition' and all that, is of much use to the middle-class kids; they want and probably need something more gutsy and 'relevant.' It's certain that the kids from the ghettos and working-class neighborhoods don't need it for Christ's sake; they need pride, need training for jobs, skills. They're not going to follow their profs into comfortable academic halls after graduation. These kids live in a real world, will still live in it when they get out of here—so it's time for us to stop fucking around with metaphysics, fugues, and biochemical subtleties."

Notice that this position is not an admittedly elitist one. There is no ironic gesture of the aristocratic snob who wishes to keep culture for the discerning: "So intimate, this Chopin, that I think his soul/ Should be resurrected only among friends/ Some two or three, who will not touch the bloom/That is rubbed and questioned in the concert room." No, it is a position identified as socially conscious, progressive, liberal, and finally radical. It is hard-nosed, pragmatic—knows what's going on and what's gotta be done. "No fucking around." The language is the socially with-it professor's, more colorful than administrative prose. But the administrator means much the same thing when he says, "We can no longer suffer the illusion that the university's commitment, in this day and age, to the arts and sciences can mean the same as it did in times past. We do ourselves a disservice and the young people we are preparing for life and service in the community, if we do not recognize new needs and strive toward a redefinition of a college education; a redefinition that is realistic in terms of a socially conscious appraisal of what the needs of the future will be and how our students, no longer the sons and daughters of the privileged and professional, can meet those needs and at the same time live socially and personally rewarding lives." Or leaving an unfortunately realistic fiction for the literal words of a recent college president of mine —so many administrators like to show they can talk tough too—"The trivium and quadrivium, ladies and gentlemen, is not where it's at."

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PROBABLY NO UNIVERSITY has responded more swiftly in word and superficial deed to the mass of students than the City University of New York. Long a collection of free colleges with fairly high entrance standards, CUNY began in the mid-'60s to relax entrance standards for selected students from the ghettos who entered through the SEEK program, providing stipends and remedial work in English, math, etc. In 1970 it inaugurated its Open Admissions policy, through which any desiring graduate of high school in New York City theoretically could gain entrance to one of the community or senior colleges of the University. Recognizing that this would mean immense faculty expansion, more facilities, and large staffed-and-financed remedial programs, these were of course promised; and of course they were only partially forthcoming. A tight budget, recession, etc.—yes: although this could have been foreseen. But throughout the academic year press releases announced how, considering . . ., remarkably successful Open Admissions was, when even a casual survey of the CUNY college faculties would have assured anyone that, academically speaking, it was only an immense PR success. It was soon obvious that something more had to be done, and early in the fall of 1970 the Chancellor's Office of CUNY came up with another plan, which I would like to analyze because it is so symptomatic. Relax your guard and it seems the creation of a middle-class professor who recently discovered a "libertarian" creed in the latest "relevant" freshman reader and is anxious to put his faith into practice.

In a document from the then chancellor, "The University Degree—Individualizing the Educational Process at the City University," it was proposed that now was the time to reform a curriculum, which both students and faculty found unsatisfying and unrealistic, which was "in the jargon of the day, irrelevant." The document proposed two directions for reform: to increase the specialization and vocational training that had already begun, and "to revise completely the structure of undergraduate liberal education to permit the student and faculty, in consultation, to determine an appropriate individual course of study free from most predetermined constraints." In the spirit of the second, CUNY would initiate a *university* B.A. that might serve as a model for future *college* B.A.'s but would in any case remain as an alternative degree program, no matter what the individual colleges decided to do.

The student choosing to pursue the university B.A. would accumulate 90 credits in any courses in any or all of the separate colleges of the University, and then the other 30 credits toward the degree would be awarded for "independent study or research, foreign travel, work experience, artistic or other creative endeavor, independent study of music, acting, or art, community action or civic service, additional course work," etc. The individual program would be subject to approval by a five-member faculty committee chosen, within certain formal restrictions, by the student.

An enlightened program—a radical venture? I don't believe it. But I am much less concerned with this program per se than with it as a kind of official symbol of the tendency throughout colleges and universities toward the relaxing and even scrapping of curriculum requirements. Considering the fact that academic credit can already be gained for independent study, that some courses already involve work or service outside the university, that there are already study-abroad programs (although true, and fortunate, that no one gets credit for "travel"), what precisely is the point?

I can speak only about the reaction at my own college, but a sizable minority feeling seemed to be that whatever the merits of the program, the unspoken motivation was a desire to "handle" the mass students somehow. The university B.A. was not to be an "Honors" program, it was to be open to anyone who chose it; and it came pre-

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cisely at the time when the university was trying to cope with the influx of mass students. It need hardly be considered merely a response to the demands of radical students that universal course requirements be relaxed or dropped, for that was effectively happening throughout the colleges, had already happened at several. And it can hardly be considered an educationally and financially sound financial response to the increased student population, for it involves no increase in faculty. Indeed, a possible financial rationale is that it allows the university to take in more students without having to give them anything like adequate faculty attention—which only increases the suspicion that it was a way of hopefully getting the mass of students off one's back, providing them a formal education without having to worry about it greatly since this "innovation" was outside the main structure to which most energy would be devoted. In the words of a colleague—"This degree says to the new students, or whispers to them: 'You've been cheated in school for 12 years now. You don't have far to go. Hold on and be cheated a while longer. It won't hurt.'" Perhaps that is too strong. But what of a spoken motive behind the program, behind the growing curricular tendency it symbolizes?

The CUNY document notes that traditional curricula assume certain "'essential' intellectual and cultural elements." But: "Faced with increased proliferation of knowledge and individual specialization, faculties are no longer able to agree on what these elements should be." Consequently, the "logic" seems apparent to me, in two directions of reform: (1) increase undergraduate specialization and (2) cease requiring the study of "essential intellectual and cultural elements" since we don't know what they are (read: forget about it and throw it on the 18-year-old student's lap). I cannot consider this tendency socially conscious, progressive, liberal, radical; it strikes me as a mere base cop-out.

Now, I know it is true that there are disagreements about what the "essentials" are. But I do not think the disagreements are all exactly intellectual ones. Many simply arise from departmental power struggles—disciplines competing for privileged places within the curriculum. I have little sympathy for the quality of disagreement because most discussion of "essentials" goes on in symposia like the University of Chicago's *The Knowledge Most Worth Having* (ed. Wayne C. Booth) or in such books as Daniel Bell's *The Reforming of General Education,* while most haggling over position and credit hours goes on in curriculum committees.

At any rate, this is currently the favored kind of reform—de-emphasis of traditional knowledge in favor of things more "relevant," with the consequent de-emphasis of the past in favor of the very Now; the increased and ever more early technical and professional specialization; the dropping of study requirements because it is snobbish, reactionary, and self-serving of us to suggest that any kind of knowledge is more valuable than any other kind. A person "should do his own thing."

I CANNOT DENY that this kind of reform has a superficial attractiveness, especially for the students who must suffer it. And while I profoundly disapprove of it in and of itself, I am especially offended that it should be called *radical.* For that is what the faculty in the reform party tend to call it while the administrators say *socially conscious:* we cannot expect the same rhetoric from these ill-matched allies. The implication is not simply that it goes to the roots of educational needs, but that this is the logical curricular extension of a radical political judgment of society's needs.

But this is not radical; it is elitist and conservative. It is elitist because it says, in effect, that the concerns of the mind and agitations of the spirit cannot mean as much to *them* as they did to *us,* or to *our* likenesses in the student bodies of prestigi-

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ous private schools. It is conservative because, in de-emphasizing those concerns and agitations in favor of an even stronger emphasis on training, skills, and the superficially relevant, it helps to ensure that the mass of students will perhaps enter the technical and professional niches society provides, with whatever dissatisfaction they have with the quality of life still fractured and grasped only on the surface, provincialism encouraged—a technological society safe and its masses intellectually, aesthetically, and politically dysfunctional.

Of course, it could be said that the reformer simply wishes "to avoid creating . . . a large class of persons whose education is unsuitable for the employment which they eventually enter." That does not strike me as a distortion of intent; although it is R. H. Tawney quoting a 1918 Federation of British Industries memorandum against the extension of higher education and calling for "practical" education for the many (see Tawney's essay in *The Radical Tradition,* "Keep the Workers' Children in their Place").

The elitism and conservatism are probably not even recognized. But the motive power is hardly a considered radicalism. It is instead (for the significant number of reformist "cadre") a failure of mind and spirit, a crisis of lost confidence, and a felt necessity to be "in" by whoring after "relevance."—"My radical students say this stuff we've been teaching them is a lot of crap, and what the hell, they may be right; it doesn't move me the way it used to."—"The world's burning around us, people are starving, and I lecture on Marxist *theory*(!) for Christ's sake!"

"The Radicalized Professor," as Dorothy Rabinowitz has suggested (*Commentary,* July 1970), is by now a fairly widespread type. As her portrait has him, he has always been a "promising young man," and now at 40 is still that—only, no longer the brightest student in class, but one of many promising young men in his department and university. He grows increasingly indistinguishable from the others while respect, power, and position, promised him when he made all A's, reside somewhere higher up. Bored with his work—he *should* have done something else—and resentful of those who *have it,* he finds himself admired by his radical students for possessing a "special empathy and social sensitivity." But who among his promising young colleagues doesn't? His empathy and sensitivity he magnifies and becomes an outspoken rebel against "pomp, uninvolvement, and ballslessness"—and is rewarded with more admiration and the feeling that he is "in." He is an embarrassing figure as Miss Rabinowitz portrays him, a remarkable example of the social rewards of patronization:

> Asked to select the most exciting literature he knows for introductory college courses, he selects black literature. (He is excited at the fact that black people can actually write books.) And he can communicate that excitement sincerely now, sensing that he is being meaningful for once; his students are excited that black people can actually write books too. The anonymous backwash of a vast Western literature never excited him as much as this meaningfulness.

Embarrassing, but real and familiar:

> He takes certain courageous and principled stands. Pondering the war in Vietnam and Cambodia, he concludes that the best solution for all this is to call for an end to university classes for the semester. Another solution: there will be no grades. Instead of classes, faculty and students will run from one quadrangle to another, to confer with each other until the semester (or the war) ends.

I do not wish to be meanspirited. It is just that there are some men you would like to talk to, but try as you may to do that, you can only save yourself from frustration and weeping by mocking. The point is that we cannot be willing to accept as radicalism this personal genuflecting to "relevance," satisfaction of a bourgeois need to be loved by all and have one's life

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made "meaningful" again. It is ultimately a kind of apolitical self-indulgence, with a near-convincing use of political rhetoric, in service of an essentially conservative end.

Mass Students and Indigenous Cultures

THERE REMAINS to be discussed a considered position, ideologically inspired—although the results seem to me much like that of the "reformism" I've been talking about. This position is conveniently represented in an essay by John McDermott, "The Laying on of Culture" (*in the Nation,* March 10, 1969). McDermott takes an intelligent position—the best, I think, the reformers have to offer. And the essay has the added virtue of talking about what we might call "first-generation" college students; most discussions of "crisis on the campus," etc., focus on the large prestigious universities and the middle-class radical students.

McDermott writes of a visit to "the University of Dexter," a thinly disguised Wayne State in Detroit. He finds a student body heavily working-class, the middle-class or working-class leftist the rarity; a faculty with a considerable number of right-minded liberal people, radical at least about the war. These faculty tend to see themselves "as embattled missionaries to the culturally Philistine," and try to convey their values, freedom of speech for instance, with examples "from HUAC witch hunting and Joe McCarthy, to Stuart Mill, Milton and Sophocles." But this does not reach the students, who return each night to their middle-American homes. Mill and Milton mean little to them, just another form of Latin; and besides that, the obvious impatience and sophistication of their professors, from another world of quality graduate schools, make what the professors have to say even more Latinate. Those who submit to the "civilizing" they are offered do it only as a ticket to a better world than the Detroit working-class neighborhood. Nothing goes very deep. So far, familiar enough.

The unfortunate thing is that there is, says McDermott, a way to convey the value of free expression—relate it to the story of the IWW, the CIO, the white-collar workers now—"in short, relate it to the actual cutural history (or future) of [the] students." For there is a further consideration: the students are being offered an "academic culture" when there is a viable culture already there, though submerged, in their experience—the political culture of labor history—and the "laying on of culture" is a way of "destroying whatever indigenous culture might remain among the American working class." It is this indigenous culture that the radical instructor should wish to strengthen. There was an analogous kind of culture, McDermott points out, which Edward Thompson analyzed in *The Making of the English Working Class*: not Shakespearean and Miltonic, not Anglican, but a "specifically political culture," solidified during the Industrial Revolution through an interplay among the shock of forced urbanization, the recollection of a dignified life in the old craft guilds, the experience of parish management in the dissenting churches, and the stubborn pride in being "freeborn Englishmen." With this political culture the English working class could not so easily be pacified by capitalists and conservatives.

But beyond contributing to the destruction of an indigenous culture, the "laying on of culture" can ill-prepare the students for the life most of them will enter after graduation: public-school teaching, lower-echelon technical positions, lower-level management—a kind of white-collar proletariat. For there are certain values and attitudes inherent in academic culture which can have no real place in that life:

(1) *Tolerance,* for instance, could make for accommodation to the dehumanizing injustice they will confront in the bureaucracies they will enter.

(2) A certain *cosmopolitanism* and *hos-*

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tility to the merely local might direct their attention away from the local where they could have some political power and toward the national where they would have little.

(3) *Hierarchic tendencies* are hostile to a native egalitarianism.

(4) *A concern with procedural matters* more than with substantive ones could be dangerous for people to whom the substantive will be extremely important and who cannot be solicitous of procedural etiquettes. This is not so clear, but McDermott quotes Peter Gay: "democracy is essentially procedural and what matters is not so much (important though it may be) what a given policy is as how it is arrived at."

(5) The political lives the students will lead should have no place for the implicitly *authoritarian ideologies* that inhere in the academy's "extensive commitment to technologism" (e.g., Zbigniew Brzezinski: "equal opportunity for all but . . . special opportunity for the singularly talented few"), and in its "clericalism," the notion that "reason and civility" are "most fully embodied in the profession of academe and the written treasures of which academe is priestly custodian and inspired interpreter."

This does not mean, continues McDermott, that the university has nothing to offer these students, not at all. It means that the "laying on of culture" should cease, and that the university should help the students truly to attain their own indigenous culture, which is imperfectly there. Specifically: a vigorous commitment to activities such as "liberation courses, seminars in local and working-class history, student-taught courses for faculty, and research projects on local and campus decision-making," and hopefully many etceteras. *Relevance.*

I can hardly do McDermott's essay justice in this brief summary; but I would like to say it is tightly argued and impressive, fairly convincing because he is right so often, and even partially convincing when he is half-right. It seems to be conceived out of experience and ideology, not out of a personal need to be "meaningful." But again, I am most interested in the essay as an articulate presentation of a certain mode of thought that is to be found in our universities today. For one instance, it is easy to substitute "black culture" for the indigenous working-class culture McDermott writes about. But the question is: how sound—and how radical—is this point of view?

I have to agree that the faculty attitude toward mass students is often that of the cultural missionary bringing the word to the Philistines. This is partially because academics are generally more cultivated than 18-year-olds from the ghetto or the suburbs, and because a sense of commitment, often rhetorically idealized into "mission," is a prerequisite for teaching. But this can let no one off the hook, for ultimately it is a matter of tone. I recall to this day the professor who, faced with my freshman enthusiasm for an Elizabethan sonnet because it reminded me of the rhythms of a favorite Baptist hymn, responded with facial gestures of outraged sensibility and mutterings about "Baptist indeed!" A crippled parody of an elegant Anglican *belle-lettriste*, he remains in my mind to this day a snotty son-of-a-bitch. But I still like sonnets, learned to then, and never really believed that he was what the world of sonnets was all about. I recall equally well the plain-spoken professor of the history of religion who taught us nothing at all beyond the most resounding superficialities because he was so busy assuring us that we already knew as much about religion in the way it counts, from our own experiences, as did the learned theologians he winkingly assigned us to read. My point is more than that one can never know under what circumstances he will learn the most (although my own experience has told me that friendly patronization is no more a friend than arrogant condescension).

The larger point is that the "relevance

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people" tend to simplify The Tradition and confuse it with something else. For it includes not only tolerance, but a kind of boiling point of manly pride: "There is a point," says the revolutionary whom we study, "beyond which I will be pushed no more." The Tradition includes not only cosmopolitanism, but an intelligent concern for the local: the ethos of the Greek and medieval city-states. Not only hierarchy, but the history of the growth of individualization and egalitarianism. Not only the procedural, but the substantive: the conflicts between turn-of-the-century progressives obsessed with "good government" and populists upset by economic deprivation in a democracy. Not only authoritarian ideologies but, as McDermott admits, libertarian ideologies as well. All those we study. The confusion lies here: what "culture," precisely, is one "laying on" when he goes to Stuart Mill, Milton, and Sophocles? Do these mean "academic culture"? The reformer confuses the Culture (capital "C") we are supposedly teaching *about* with the kind of culture (small "c") which *may* obtain within the academy. For instance, Brzezinski does not speak for me, though his kind of technologism does obtain among significant numbers of faculty; this does not mean, however, that The Tradition makes a special plea for technologism. Academics may be extremely concerned with hierarchy—student grading, academic rank, etc.—but that does not mean The Tradition those academics study and lecture about is any more the story of the "fortunate" growth of hierarchies than the story of the "fortunate" liberation from caste. One thing it does mean, I suppose, is that there is often an immense cleavage between what one teaches and what one is—the brutally authoritarian lecturer on anarchism, for instance, or the trimmer who celebrates Dante. We needn't be excessively condemnatory, however, for the fact is that The Tradition is a great deal larger than the academy. I would like to say "better than," but that's too easy. Realistically, it simply includes the values and mores—the culture—which may at any one time, in any specific discipline, obtain, and a great deal more as well. We simply have to distinguish between Culture and the University of Dexter or any other.

BUT MORE THAN THAT. Leave aside the fact that The Tradition includes much more than those five values from tolerance to authoritarianism. Just focus on those values as elements of "academic culture." Are they necessarily antagonistic to a worthy life the mass student, or any other, might lead? Seen as components of a kind of inquisitive cast of mind, might they not be extremely valuable? Tolerance does not have to mean accommodation; it can mean receptivity to argument. Cosmopolitanism need not mean hostility to the local; it can simply mean not provincial. Hierarchism need not suggest some crypto-monarchist mode of thought; it can be, rather, a recognition that given an honestly considered standard of judgment, some things *are* more important than others—the refusal to cop-out on life with a silly, immature relativism, the rejection of the inanity that "anything goes," that all that matters is that one do his thing. Procedure is surely empty, a mockery, without equal and more concern for substance—Karl Mannheim said a lot about functional and substantial rationality—but proceduralism can mean that one is to understand the terms within which he is thinking or behaving, or ponder long before he concludes that an end justifies a means. The technologism and clericalism, so described, I do find twin horrors, but not so the virtues they are parodies of: the knowledge that some people do know more about some things than we and that we are fools not to listen to them, which is not to say, obey or worship expertise. Furthermore, I think these "academic" values would be useful even in "liberation courses, seminars in

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local and working-class history, student-taught courses for faculty, and research projects on local and campus decision-making."

But what of the charge that the "laying on of culture" is destructive of an indigenous culture, whether it is the "academic culture" or the knowledge of Culture that is laid on? The charge begs a question the reformer has to recognize and the skeptic has to be careful not simply to dismiss. Working-class students sometimes bring a mixture of reverence and suspicion to the arts, a kind of nervousness—since high art is not normally a consumer item for their parents. But is there in America really a working-class culture that has an integrity of its own?

A better case might be made if one talked about an indigenous black culture. Many broad American middle-class values obviously have been accepted and absorbed by blacks, but it is equally obvious that it is a different thing to be black, and certain cultural perspectives are necessarily different.

There are elements of traditional black culture blacks have recently begun to root out: the old accommodationism, for instance, which is hardly the strategy for civil rights and liberation in the way it was for just surviving in times past. The point is, if one doesn't wish to be superficial about indigenous cultures, one has to recognize that some parts of them are worth valuing and saving and some not at all. And one has to question whether all that is called an element of the indigenous culture is really that. The current militant view of "Afroism," for instance; isn't that too a "laying on of culture" of a different sort? Appreciated, perhaps politically necessary, but still a "laying on." But this is a distinction, not a denial; it is foolish to ignore that the indigenous culture exists. Leadbelly songs may be played in black homes even today, but Joe Hill songs in white working-class homes?

Any comparison with the 19th-century English working class is interesting, but what it ultimately reveals is the absence of very much like it now in America. This is not to deny out-of-hand a working-class culture, but to question the notion that it is a political culture and that it is at this moment in history indigenous. Surely this is a late date to have to argue that whatever the economic facts that make absurd the notion of a classless society here, the American working class has in terms of social values almost vanished into the great middle-class consensus, or is trying very hard to do so. And in terms of political values, the working class tends to support regular Democratic politicians just as the majority of the urban middle class does. When significant numbers of the working class politically rebel against regularity they tend to turn, as we've seen often enough recently, toward a right-wing populism, which is hardly a part of what is supposed to be an indigenous labor culture. And I doubt very seriously that a longing for the excitement of the Wobblies or the 1930s CIO is really a part of the cultural makeup of the sons and daughters of the workers —or for that matter of the workers themselves. Perhaps that respect could be encouraged in the university, but the chances are that one would be encouraging a respect for something the student first learned about *in* the university. No, I am sorry, but worrying about whether one is going to destroy an indigenous culture means, ultimately, worrying about whether one is going to destroy an essentially petit-bourgeois culture. That may be a valid concern, but as radicalism it is questionable.

Nor am I sure how valid even that concern is. The fear of cultural damage begs entirely too many questions.

Is an Aristotelian capacity for clarity bad for a working-class student, will it make him turn his back on union democracy? Will an understanding of Mill on liberty be bad for a black student, will it make him turn his back

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on black voter registration? Nonsense. It would be futile to argue that great radicals as different as William Godwin, Leon Trotsky, and W. E. B. DuBois were made conservative by their concern for the past and historical continuity. But, the relevance people might answer, that loads the question; we're not looking for Godwins, Trotskys, DuBoises. To which one should ask, *Why not? Why sell people short beforehand?*

Another question may arise here. However one judges indigenous black culture and working-class culture, even if the latter is really petit-bourgeois, is it not a radical position to object to black and working-class youth having to become conversant with what is an essentially middle-class culture, The Tradition? That might be a radical position if the assumption it makes were true; but it isn't. For the hard fact is that Mill-Milton-Sophocles is no more alien to the working class than to any other—as anyone should know who has taught middle-class students who are not all, after all, the offspring of professors, publishers, artists, and the occasional businessman-sponsor of the local symphony orchestra; or as anyone should know who can distinguish between a crucial and life-changing, even shattering, relationship to great art and science and a middle-class consumerist attitude toward High Culture one day, and perhaps mod clothing the next. No, The Tradition is owned, by content or rights, by no class; although—I would stress—it has been made available in the past to one class to the exclusion of the others.

Condescension as Radicalism

EARLIER I QUOTED a social democrat writing about conservatism. This was because I share his uneasiness about the disappearance of the past, and because I wanted to admit that the position I am taking is called conservative today just as that of the relevance people is called radical. There would be no point in bothering about labels if they did not carry such persuasive force. And I suppose my position is conservative about the essential *substance* of higher education; I have said little about the reform of *methods* of teaching, and this is not the place to do it—it's a subject in itself. But what I rebel against is the assumption that a certain conservatism about the curricular substance of higher education is a political conservatism, and that a desire for radical change of the curriculum toward "relevance" is a political radicalism. That idea is a cheap sell; it is dangerously, because appealingly, simple-minded. For one thing, it makes radicalism a mere dynamics: if you want to change something you're radical and if you want to change something a lot you're very radical. Ironically, it is a form of "proceduralism" in the worst sense: the radical value lies in the procedure—the act of changing something—rather than in what something is changed from or into.

Now there are two kinds of relevance we've heard and talked about: call them the pragmatic and the ideological. The first is an emphasis, even heavier than in the past, on technical and some professional training—the position primarily of the administrator-reformer. The second is an emphasis on "liberation courses . . ." etc., a kind of psycho-politico-sociology of the very now—the position primarily of the "radicalized" professor. But pragmatic and ideological relevance can be talked about together because they share an animus toward The Tradition, share similar assumptions about the mass of students, and are both "socially conscious."

Rhetoric aside, their social consciousness takes the form of consciousness of, a kind of unrecognized solicitude for, *society as it is,* and thereby ultimately constitutes a conservative social consciousness. The "pragmatic relevance" people would devote most of the university's energies to preparing students to enter the technical and professional positions that society will have waiting for

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them (if technological advances go well)—to enter those positions with precious little knowledge of a human's place in the cultural and physical universe beyond the boundaries and functions of his job.

Students are prepared to be good technicians and little more than that. Society as it is is conserved. The "ideological relevance" people wish to scrap or emasculate The Tradition for the sake of an emphasis on where things are really at at this very moment, where they are at with society, where they are at with "the kids." Set aside the fact that so many "relevant" courses descend to the level of people sitting around saying "Come on, man, tell it like it is—no uptight crap," or "Hey! That's a beautiful idea. You people are really with it—you know what I mean?" or "O.K. So now we can see the Establishment is really a fascist superstructure." For it *is* true that many traditional courses descend to the level of uncritical celebration of what has been simply because it has been—the various forms of servile worship before historical authority. "Priestly custodians" are as obnoxious as mod-spoken encounter group leaders in Current Issues 101. The point is: set aside what is admittedly the worst possibility, and the "ideological relevance" position is still wanting in radical seriousness.

For "relevance" takes a student who suffers from what I have called the temporal provincialism of the young and gives an institutional reinforcement to that provincialism—a reinforcement all the more pernicious because of its radical rhetoric. Or assume the case of the student who does not suffer from that provincialism and wants to know about that past which has made this present: he is in effect told that that is not so important as . . . . Such a student will of course be the exception, for he will be one of the rare ones who have somehow escaped the temporally provincial ethos of American society. But that's just the point. "Relevance," being ultimately an educational form of that very ethos, offers little possibility of a profound and radical understanding and criticism of our society. It may provide the student with an exciting and rebellious language, but its root effect is conservative, since—evidently unknowingly—it accepts and propounds the society's basic metaphysical (such as it is) assumption. The effect of such educational practice is the churning out of fundamentally familiar Americans, essentially unchanged by four years of college, perhaps more liberated in language and perhaps with their hearts in the right place, but trapped by reinforced modes of thought in the Now as they were only potentially trapped before.

There are some differences between the "pragmatic" and "ideological" relevance people: different rhetoric, different curricular priorities—job skills or "finding your head." But the attitude toward the mass student is the same, and both reveal a lack of comprehension of what the arts and sciences are about. For often one hears from the reformers that only a small minority of the mass students will continue to academic programs in graduate school—so what is the value of the traditional for the majority? The logic and value system behind this sentiment ought to be clear: the purpose of studying an art or science is to prepare yourself for a profession in that art or science. Reading Locke is valuable if you're going to be a professor of philosophy, reading Shakespeare if a professor of English. This is a careerist and philistine view of higher education, not a radical one.

Actually the relevance view (except for a few serious radicals like McDermott) is an unfortunate marriage of careerism with a kind of silly worshipfulness of youth, youth conveniently defined by what we think we know of middle-class youth. It is true that many middle-class students have vocally and sometimes articulately demanded more "relevance" in the colleges and a corre-

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sponding de-emphasis of the traditional, often associating humane learning with political reaction and capitalist imperialism—after all, Pompidou used to be a professor before he became a banker and Johnson invited the artists to the White House. So, since the kids we really know best, the ones with brains and upbringing, don't want it anymore, what could the mass of kids possibly want with it? It could be no more than a form of exoticism for *them*. Is this an overly harsh caricature? I think not. For there is finally no great distance at all between an aristocratic and upper-middle-class ethic of "humane arts and sciences for the deserving few, practical education for the many" and the new "radical" ethic of "practical education for the deserving many, arts and sciences for the few."

I HAVE SUGGESTED that we tend to define "youth" by what we think we know of middle-class youth—an inadequate definition and not least because it is over-simple even within that narrow range. My own experience tells me that a lack of interest in The Tradition is not universal. Some students are interested for reasons of intellect or sheer curiosity and some, admittedly, for professional and careerist reasons. The majority who rebel vocally or through silent consent do so for various reasons: some are flatly bored by intellectual and aesthetic concerns, period; some are profoundly unprofound pragmatists—"what's in it for me?"; some are compelled by belief or a desire to be "in," to take a popular stance; and some are experiencing something more complex they may not be aware of.

Often the denigration and verbal rejection of The Tradition is a kind of awkward incorporation of it, a kind of violent reshaping of its contours and redefinition of one's self. This is done with little grace, to be sure, but only the trivial would identify ease, manneredness, and respectful decorum as the primary qualities of a relationship to Culture, certainly of a youthful relationship to it. This awkward incorporation and reshaping is what Professor Roush would call a dialectical relationship to tradition, what Whitman meant: "Yet could ye, indeed, but breathe your breath of life into our New World's nostrils—not to enslave us, as now, but for our needs, to breed a spirit like your own—perhaps (dare we to say it?) to dominate, *even destroy* what you yourselves have left!" (My italics.)

I AM SUGGESTING that for many middle-class students—not the proud and self-possessed Know-nothings—the verbal rejection, the metaphorical destruction, may be a profound and personal use of tradition, an education by tradition, an entrance into and consequent reshaping of tradition—not exaggerated: a process of maturity. After all, it is by such a process that tradition has been created; that is the essence of its continuity.

Now it seems to me this is the middle-class student one should listen to, not the boor or Know-nothing. But one has to act intelligently even while listening intelligently. It makes no sense to translate this student's individual "destruction" of tradition into a collective program of curriculum reform for others; that only denies the others the same opportunity, only says to the others, "Here's a short-cut: you just *be* what he has *come to.*" Such a program—and I think that is what the logic of "relevant" reform is, insofar as the reform is intelligible and halfway intellectually justifiable—strikes me as a new way of cheating people. And insofar as it is a reform primarily for the mass of students, it is a monumentally detestable form of bourgeois arrogance and condescension.

Let the mass student do his own "destroying!" Why does he not deserve the opportunity? I put it this way only for emphasis, since I have already suggested I do not think a dialectical relationship to tradition happens by itself. So why should he be denied a syncretic

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view? Why should we deny him the chance to test his resources for enjoyment and his capacity for respect for what's valuable in the past and the chance to transcend a temporal provincialism? I take a minor liberty, I think, in speaking of the student as Trotsky spoke of the poet of a future epoch who would "revive all the old forms, which arose in the course of the development of the creative spirit" and give them new meaning. "All that is necessary is . . . to re-think in a new way the thoughts of mankind, and to re-feel its feelings."

Now, I am under no illusion that the mass students are, for the most part, just aching to study the "traditional" instead of the "relevant." But I do think a body of intellectuals and scholars has a responsibility to do more than give instant congratulation for prejudices. And, on the other hand, I do not find it a justified assumption that the mass students are or will be just not interested. They are not so utterly different a species from the middle-class students.

I suggest that the apparent immense difference in spirit and aptitude between the imagined normal student of the past and the imagined normal mass student derives not really from a comparative sociology of class and social background but from the fact of the greater numbers of students: more young people of privileged as well as of underprivileged background go to college today, which means naturally that there are many who are simply not up to the intellectual level of what used to be called "college material." I suspect that these many are often facilely associated with the mass student—a point of view I think the radical has to reject, and not merely as an ideological reflex.

At any rate, I hope it is not necessary to say that here is no argument against professional training and an academic critique of contemporary society. I only want to urge that the former not replace the liberating function of a liberal education and that the latter be really sociological and psychological and not *popularly relevant,* and that both be pursued within the framework of a knowledge of past achievement and failure and of the historical continuity of achievement and failure. It is so easy to fall into and so costly to live a desperate life: defined by one's job or profession, ignorant of cultural birthright, isolated in time!

I CONCLUDE with a personal observation: there is no point in assuming a disinterestedness that is not there. It has been my experience in personal contact that those in the university with whom I do not agree about these matters are, I mean most of them, the offspring of fairly established comfort—and those with whom I do agree are not. In other words, I am trying to suggest a truth of my experience without claiming an unfailing sociological generalization. I suspect a kind of middle-class wastefulness. There is probably a difference in present attitude between faculty who always knew they would go to the university and those who either had no reason to suspect they would or who only hoped they would. The person who just knew, who never wondered if . . . probably does not easily grasp how it appears now to the person who could at best only wonder. The person who always knew he would go to college probably cannot imagine easily having been expected to study a skill because "it's a good idea to have a trade." He can afford—it costs him little—what seems to me a rather cavalier attitude. Understand that I am not talking about climbing, and making no appeal for sympathy for petit-bourgeois ambition; something a great deal more subtle than that. I am talking about the achievement of some degree of cultural articulateness; about how that opportunity appears in retrospect to those for whom it was something of a surprise and seems now a gift. □

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H. W. Benson

Miners for Democracy

A Report from West Virginia

In the back seat, the coal miner sitting next to me said something about miners' caps.

"No," said the driver, "we don't want any miners' caps at this convention." He kept his eye on the road; at first you didn't notice the shiny bald spot on the back of his head because he kept his hair so short. He wore no jacket on that hot Saturday, May 27; the sleeves of his white shirt were neatly folded. He reminded me of my neighbor, a stocky 45-year-old East Side cabdriver, but he was a West Virginia coal miner. He mentioned that his father and grandfather had both been coal miners.

His car was a four-door sedan, only 3,800 miles on it, tastefully upholstered, no ashes or wrappers on the floor. When we finished the trip from the Pittsburgh airport and arrived at Wheeling College, West Virginia, there were already some 375 miners in session for the founding convention of the Miners for Democracy. Before it adjourned the next day, Sunday, there were about 450. (Press, visitors, and staff brought the audience up to about 600.)

The driver was right. There were no miners' caps. There were suit jackets despite the heat, white shirts and ties, and crazy-colored sport shirts. The delegates were all working miners; there was not one paid official among them. Many had been down in the pits the day before. They had driven to Wheeling from mining towns throughout the whole region, paid their own travel expenses, food and motel; later they chipped in $300 to help those who had come a long way. One delegate had come 1,500 miles from Nova Scotia. In the rows of cars parked in the open fields, there was not one rusty jalopy.

They all were insurgents, critics, rebels, which means that one instantly imagines people standing on chairs, demanding rights, in a raucous scramble for the floor. But it wasn't that way at all. The demeanor of these men was perhaps the most impressive aspect of their unofficial oppositionist convention. They acted with such dignity and self-possession that the whole affair might have seemed dull to anyone not aware of the deadly tension behind that decorum.

The miners' leader, Jock Yablonski, had been murdered two years before. By this time, after convictions and confessions, it was legally established that the murderers had been hired with the aim of destroying the opposition in the United Mine Workers. The remaining question is, how high did the murder conspiracy reach into the union officialdom? The fight was reaching its climax. A federal court had ordered an election under government control. The delegates had come to pick candidates for top office. MFD leaders were worried that their spokesmen would be in danger when they campaigned in isolated mining communities. They knew that thousands of other miners, and a broader public, were watching, wondering if these delegates could be trusted to select new men to run this once-great union. For the first time in more than 40 years, an opportunity loomed to restore union democracy for the coal miners. All this explains why

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they all handled themselves with such self-restraint.

The chairman was Karl Kafton, a blacklisted miner from Moundsville, West Virginia, who handled the sessions with exceptional tact, careful to treat every speaker with the same courtesy. When you watched him, you knew these men could produce the talent necessary to run this union. Several candidates vied for the top spots, and the voting system was complicated. A miner became a delegate to this convention just by coming and expressing solidarity with the MFD, so that a system of weighting ballots was essential to avoid an accidental unrepresentative majority in balloting. Each district had been apportioned a voting quota determined by weighting the number of votes cast in the last UMW election modified by the number of votes probably stolen in that district. The vote assigned to each district was then divided equally among all delegates from that district. The point is that in a contest over choosing candidates, a hot fight over this system could have split the convention wide open.

One district, heavily represented because it was close to the convention city, protested that it had not been assigned enough votes and demanded more. The objection was put to the delegates, calmly discussed, and withdrawn without rancor. Not that they were a bunch of saints. After the candidates had been chosen, there were rumors of election maneuverings, proposed deals—the usual stuff—but none of that created any crisis.

IN THESE DAYS of ethnic lore, coal miners often appear as the surviving remnants of some misplaced mountain clan, hillbillies, tobacco juice spitters, faces like worn leather, cracker-barrel philosophers. Banjo-twanging song and story tell of old-fashioned customs in a bygone day. The *Village Voice* is particularly good at this sort of thing.

In such accounts, the aspirations of the miners are not evidence of ambitions that may be stirring the nation, but nostalgic reminders of the yearnings of men bypassed by history. You sympathize, somewhat condescendingly, as you sympathize with the plight of the bald eagle.

That image of miners as a race apart seems to fit almost everyone's political, ideological, or practical necessities. Any ultraleftist radical can continue to enjoy a cultivated contempt for hard-hat city workers as a privileged labor aristocracy and still indulge a Marxistical taste by idealizing some imagined underground proletariat. Yet, for every miner coughing out his black lung and facing rock falls, there is a hard-hat building trades worker facing cancer from asbestos, liver and kidney failure from new chemicals in paints and coatings, and death from scaffold falls.

It is comfortable for those who identify the labor movement exclusively with its officials to think of miners as a curiously unrepresentative breed of mavericks. In this view, coal miners are simple folk, not yet drawn out of the woods into the realism of modern power, like moonshiners quixotically resisting revenooers. Coal miners, from this angle of vision, have yet to learn that union officials possess one virtue that transcends many (or all) defects: power.

It is time to end all this Li'l Abner stuff. The story of the miners' revolt is not anthropology and folk lore. It is a big chapter in current labor history.

American miners are modern industrial workers; they look just like men from Michigan auto plants or Pennsylvania steel mills. They don't pick and shovel, they don't smear boots in mule manure, they don't bathe in open wash tubs. They are highly skilled machine operators and mechanics. The cost of a continuous mining machine, which gouges out the mine face with huge revolving conveyor cutters, is some $200,000. The Joy loader, which scoops out coal in smaller seams, costs somewhat less. Shuttle cars, which carry coal from the face, may run up

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to $100,000 with all their related accessory equipment. It takes skilled operators to run them, and machinists, welders, electricians, and carpenters to keep the operations going.

Two delegates told me that in one of the largest coal mines in the world, 750 miners work full-time for the Clinchfield Coal Company in Duty, Virginia, in seams with enough coal to last, they estimate, 50 years. They take home around $10,000 a year, maybe more. In these modern industrial underground factories you can get killed or permanently disabled. Their union, they are convinced, doesn't protect them because, they say, their officials are in collusion with the mine owners. To get the UMW to do a proper job, they must restore internal democracy and oust its imperious officials.

The wave of insurgency reaches everywhere among miners because they have almost all had personal connection with death and disaster. Two of those Duty miners saw a buddy smashed to death while pulling timbers with a Joy loader when the mine roof started working, and he didn't get out fast enough. The steel cab that protected him could withstand tons of rock, but it was useless when the whole shelf fell. "It was like hitting a grape with a hammer," said the man who had been working the nearby shuttle car. "His skin just split open. He weighed 225 pounds and all we could scrape out for burial in a plastic bag was about 40 pounds. The rest of him was left behind with $400,000 worth of wrecked equipment, sprayed over with rock dust, and forgotten when they closed off that section."

Arnold Miller, the MFD candidate for president, has been burned with battery acid; he has black lung so bad he can no longer work at mining. Mike Trbovitch, their man for vice-president, saw a close friend killed in a mine accident in May. Harry Patrick, running for Secretary-Treasurer, had one brother killed in a mine accident; his father lost a leg. Hazel Dickens, a folk singer from a West Virginia mining family, told the delegates that two brothers had died of black lung.

THE CONVENTION ADOPTED a platform readily because there was nothing much to argue about. It contains no wages plank but deals literally with life and death, calling for effective protection against cave-ins and gas explosions, black lung and other industrial diseases; for active miners' safety committees backed by the International; for honest administration of pension funds; for medical aid to disabled miners and their families; for protection of the land against pollution and for the reclamation of areas devastated by uncontrolled strip mining. Above all, the platform demands a return of the union to membership control and restoration of autonomy in the districts.

When you hear union men applaud passionately for demands that should be commonplace in any decent union, you wonder: what happened to this union, once the most progressive in the American labor movement, that a man must die to rededicate it to such basic needs? The answer is simply that democracy was destroyed; and after 40 years of authoritarianism, the union came to represent its officials at the expense of the members.

How do we know they really want democracy, these miners? For one thing, they say so. At UMW conventions over the decades, John L. Lewis would befuddle the delegates with oratory on the puzzling intricacies of democracy, heaping literarious scorn upon critics who wanted to elect district officials. That scorn for democracy finally rendered the ranks incapable of guarding against death in the mines. "We are proud of our name: Miners for *Democracy*," one delegate said at Wheeling in 1972; they applauded enthusiastically.

In two days at the Wheeling convention there was not one laudatory reference to John L. No one felt compelled to intone that everything would be fine if only the great leader were still here.

A white-haired old gentleman was introduced from the platform. He looked like a business agent from one of the construction

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trades; but he turned out to be a retired anthracite miner, Charles Ned, almost 80. In the most moving of all the convention addresses, he told how Lewis, to wide acclaim, once boasted of "winning" pensions of $100 a month for the hard-coal men. When the fanfare faded, payments dropped quickly to $50. Today these pensioners are down to $30—and of that, $1.25 comes off for union dues. The hall was quiet while the old man spoke. When he finished, the men rose for a standing ovation.

These miners seem ready to forget Lewis, at least for now. Many hold him responsible for the degradation of their union, because, in destroying their rights, he turned it over to a self-serving officialdom that has betrayed them. Still, remembering the great battles he did lead for the CIO and the miners, they will not denounce in public his legacy of authoritarianism. This is no time to brood over the past, they seem to be thinking, but to act for the future. But they are not looking for a new set of bosses.

The miners have known a lifetime of strong-man and strong-arm rule. Now they want officers who will return control to the rank and file. That's what they kept saying at this convention.

The MFD chose Arnold Miller, Mike Trbovitch, and Harry Patrick to run for the three highest positions. None of them has held national office before; they are miners; they are insurgents who were never part of the ruling machine. All three speak in soft conversational tones, without high-blown oratory, about death in the mines and democracy. Win or lose, Miners for Democracy will undoubtedly achieve an important base in the union. And with the restoration of district autonomy, they will surely win some key district posts. Karl Kafton is running for international executive board from the 10,000-member District 6.

JOE RAUH flew in from Washington on Saturday morning, addressed the convention, and left promptly. "The miners have a right to hear their chief counsel," he said, "but I have nothing to do with picking candidates. I will work like hell for whoever you choose."

Rauh is a former chairman of the Americans for Democratic Action (currently vice-chairman), an eminent liberal Democrat considered too "radical" by some liberals and too "liberal" by many radicals. But no one has ever questioned his talents as a lawyer. With him on your side in court, you may not always win; but they will know you were there.

He recalled that it was exactly three years ago that he went to work for the miners' opposition after meeting Yablonski on May 27, 1969, when Jock spoke of his decision to run against Tony Boyle for president.

"The coal miners have been good to me," Yablonski then had said, "and I owe them something. I've got to do it even though I will probably be killed."

"When he first talked to me," said Rauh in Wheeling, "I was sure he was exaggerating. I have lived to learn that it was all an understatement. Jock Yablonski showed the greatest kind of courage I have seen."

Joseph (Jock) Yablonski was 60 when he was murdered. When he died, he was a member of the UMW International Executive Board, having served under Lewis and then Boyle, always part of the team. He had only to sit back a little longer and retire in comfort. But he couldn't do that. In almost 40 years as an official, he had learned many secrets, which is undoubtedly why he had to die after breaking with the machine.

Without Rauh, the 1969 Yablonski campaign would probably have foundered. No union opposition can mount an effective campaign against a ruthless officialdom without using federal law to protect its internal rights; and that is virtually impossible without expert legal aid.

With Rauh's help, Yablonski did remark-

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ably well. His son Ken told the convention that after the 1969 election count his father had said, "I never lost an election in the UMW, and I didn't lose this one. It was stolen."

When Yablonski was killed and his followers were stunned by the tragedy, Rauh and Yablonski's two sons helped restore the movement's morale by legal actions that led finally to the court order for a government-supervised election in December 1972.

The fight in the miners' union and the death of his friend Jock was a bitter education for Joe Rauh in problems of union democracy. The two men had hit it off, had become good friends, and spent long hours together during the campaign. Rauh keeps a composite photograph mounted on the wall of his room: underneath Jock's portrait is a picture of three graves of the man, his wife, and daughter, all murdered.

"We don't intend to stop," he said in Wheeling, "until Tony Boyle is behind bars where he belongs."

JOSEPH, JR. (CHIP) AND KENNETH YABLONSKI are both lawyers. (They are not UMW members and cannot run for union office.) After their dad's death, they helped the Miners for Yablonski to reorganize as the Miners for Democracy and continue the reform crusade.

Ken works out of Charleston, West Virginia. Chip runs the Washington Project, a D.C. public law firm that handles miners' cases, with the help of two other dedicated lawyers, Clarice Feldman and Dan Edelman. That combination of Rauh, the two Yablonski boys, and the Washington Project makes a formidable legal staff that has already won outstanding victories in federal court, bolstering the democratic rights not of miners alone but of all union members. (If James Morrissey had enjoyed rights in the National Maritime Union like those won in the UMW, he might be NMU National Secretary today.)

The MFD legal team forced the U.S. Labor Department to pursue its case for autonomy in the UMW districts. The Landrum-Griffin Act, which took effect in 1959, presumes that trusteeships are invalid after 18 months; some UMW districts had been under trusteeship for 30 years. Nevertheless, the Labor Department delayed for five years before instituting suit against seven district trusteeships in 1964, only to permit its suit to meander through the courts without resolution for the next seven years. In the interim, Yablonski was murdered. That's one reason Rauh could accuse the Department of contributing to the murder by its "icy indifference." MFD lawyers, by contrast, brought suit against two trusteeships in other districts; by May 10, 1972, they had won their case. The Labor Department suit, under pressure, was concluded two weeks later, ending the seven trusteeships. It took the Labor Department 12 years to accomplish what the MFD team finished in 10 months.

In the U.S. Supreme Court on January 17, MFD attorneys won a landmark decision on union elections. Up till then, unionists who were the victims of election fraud were denied status in court. They could complain to the Labor Department, which might (but usually did not) process their complaints or, in exceptional cases, might even sue in federal court to upset an election. But in all the negotiations and deals among union officials, government officials, and judges, the complainant was the forgotten man. He could never know what was being cooked up behind his back. It is customary, under these conditions, for the Labor Department to trade off the complainants' rights for a promise by union officials to be good boys in the future. When that future arrives, the whole thing usually is forgotten.

MFD lawyers would not remain at the mercy of government officials who had repeatedly torpedoed miners' rights. When the Labor Department, under the pressure of a national scandal, finally agreed to sue against the 1969 miners' election, the MFD sought to intervene as an interested party so that

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the insurgents' case could be presented with vigor by their own representatives rather than by lackadaisical Labor Department attorneys who usually sought to conciliate the offending officials. The Labor Department resisted the MFD application, but the January 17 Supreme Court ruling established the right of complainants to intervene. For the first time, oppositionists were in court when the conditions of a supervised election were determined. In contrast, when Benjamin Naumoff, a labor bureaucrats' bureaucrat, supervised the 1969 NMU election for the Labor Department, opposition leader Jim Morrissey first discovered the election rules in a press release from Naumoff's office.

In other cases, MFD attorneys goaded the Labor Department into suing against a District 5 election; they blocked the use of union funds for the factional purposes of union officials; they stopped an internal trial for "dual unionism"; they halted other internal disciplinary trials against dissenters; they voided moves by the officials to undercut the rights of oppositionists by constitutional amendments.

"We are a mighty army, and we're going to win." Ken Hechler shook a fist for emphasis. He represents West Virginia in Congress. There are many prolabor congressmen but few who have ever supported union reformers. (I know of only one other.) Hechler, however, identified himself with the miners' opposition from the very beginning, when it was still only a tiny band around Yablonski.

"A lot of critics charge that a member of Congress has no right to stick his nose into the internal affairs of a labor union." He rejected that view. "It is my job to represent thousands of coal miners and their families. I had the obligation to protect their interests."

How green he was, he recalled, when he first went to Congress and turned over complaints from miners to UMW officials, expecting them to provide effective union service. But something happened on November 20, 1968, that transformed Hechler from a run-of-the-mill liberal, casting proper votes at required moments, into a crusader for peoples' rights. On that day, Consolidation Coal No. 9 mine exploded, and 78 men were killed.

"Here for the first time," said Hechler,

> I saw where Tony Boyle placed his priorities. Did he stand up and demand an end to slaughter at the coal mines? Did he insist that Congress pass tough legislation on mine health and safety? Did he denounce the slick relationship between the coal operators and those charged with enforcing the safety laws —the Bureau of Mines? No. Tony Boyle got up before the television cameras and, before a nationwide audience, used the occasion to apologize for the Consolidation Coal Co. and defend the safety record of the company.

When his congressional district was merged with another, taking in most of the state's coal-mining counties, Hechler faced an uphill primary battle against James Kee,

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whose family had held the fourth district seat since 1932 and who was backed by a strong Democratic machine. Kee was actively supported by the UMW, which savagely attacked Hechler as antilabor. The AFL–CIO West Virginia Federation of Labor also backed Kee, but with less enthusiasm. Hechler's main organizational support came from the Miners for Democracy; he seemed doomed in a one-sided fight. But when the votes were tallied on May 9, Hechler won by a landslide, defeating Kee better than 2 to 1, or 50,000 to 24,500.

When he stepped down from the platform and passed the press table, this reporter shook his hand and said, "I'd like to express my admiration. Not many congressmen would dare to support union insurgents." He said nothing for a moment and then replied, "As you get older, you begin to ask yourself what you're doing with your life."

FOR THE FIRST TIME since the 1930s, a movement of rank-and-file workers has won effective public support in a fight to reform their union. Coal miners are part of a new kind of alliance among unionists, public officials, and liberals, although they still lack outspoken support from within the labor movement. (Leonard Woodcock is said to have expressed sympathy for their effort.)

When Dow Wilson and Lloyd Green were murdered for their reform fight in the Painters' Union, there was but a minor ripple of protest from the liberal-labor community. Something about the miners brings out the best in people; they are effective where other union reformers have failed. They have moved men like Hechler and Rauh and others. If these miners succeed in reforming their union, it may induce laborites, liberals, and civil libertarians to notice those who strive for democracy in the labor movement. Labor power is a force for social justice. Perhaps the coal miners can teach us that labor power can be a force for social justice even when directed by rank-and-file workers against errant union officials. □

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Victor Erlich

Solzhenitsyn's New Novel

August 1914, the first installment of Solzhenitsyn's broadly conceived historical trilogy, thus far has had a mixed reception.* The publication of the Russian text of the novel in Paris has provided an occasion for another virulent Soviet campaign against its author. *Literaturnaya Gazeta* has featured hostile articles by Finnish writer Martti Larni and by an obscure Polish journalist, Jerzy Romanowski, who managed to detect in Solzhenitsyn's portrayal of the Russian defeat at Tannenberg an insidious tendency to extol the "German militarists." These attacks by foreign nonentities were duly followed by irate letters from a standard assortment of native nonreaders.

Less predictably, the response of Solzhenitsyn's Russian-speaking admirers in the West has ranged from enthusiasm to uneasiness and disappointment. If the eminent Slavist Roman Jakobson hailed *August 1914* as Solzhenitsyn's most remarkable work to date, Roman Gul, editor of the Russian emigré journal *New Review*, in a sympathetic article, deplored the novel's alleged anachronisms and unfelicitous neologisms.

Gul's strictures, though often picayune, are not entirely unwarranted. Solzhenitsyn's latest novel lacks the firmness of outline, the sureness of touch, in a word, the authority of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch* or *The First Circle*. The prose is not infrequently contrived and unwieldy. The account of the East Prussian campaign is overdocumented: in his determination to reproduce as accurately as possible the mechanism of the debacle, Solzhenitsyn weighs down his chronicle with operational detail. Now and then, in an apparent attempt to enliven the narrative, as well as to render directly the turmoil of battle, he resorts to a cinematic technique, oddly reminiscent of, though hardly derivative from, the "Camera Eye" sections of Dos Passos's *U.S.A.* But this self-conscious device proves less than effective.

Yet this is only part of the story. Though *August 1914* is a seriously flawed work, at its best it is as moving and vivid as any of Solzhenitsyn's previous creations. Some of the scenes, e.g., General Samsonov's farewell to his troops, belong among the most memorable passages in modern Russian fiction. Moreover, the occasional lapses of *August 1914* are, in a sense, a measure of how difficult is the task that Solzhenitsyn has set himself—a task especially exacting for a writer whose persuasiveness has often derived from a hard-earned firsthand knowledge of his materials. For what is attempted in *August 1914* is an imaginative repossession of a vanished world, a total reconstruction of Russian society on the eve of a great upheaval, and a searching inquiry into the causes of its disintegration. Clearly, Solzhenitsyn has embarked upon an enterprise of Tolstoyan proportions.

But if the scope of Solzhenitsyn's emerging epic makes one think of Tolstoy, its perspective

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* *Avgust chetyranadsatogo (August 1914)*, by Alexander Solzhenitsyn. Paris: YMCA Press, 1971. An English translation, by Michael Glenny, is being published this fall by Farrar, Straus & Giroux. Quotations here are translated by Victor Erlich.

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is emphatically at odds with that of Solzhenitsyn's favorite Russian master. One of the most interesting aspects of *August 1914* is a tacit polemic with Tolstoy's debunking of military science, with his insistence that no plans, however carefully laid, can significantly affect the actual outcome of a battle, shaped as it is by a myriad of unfathomable contingencies. *War and Peace* pits the slow, seemingly indecisive Kutuzov against the puffed-up narcissist Napoleon: while the latter suffers from the delusion of being in control of events, the former knows in his bones that no one can or ever will lead.

Solzhenitsyn has precious little use for these crotchety iconoclasms. He is deeply convinced that in war, as in any other realm, professional competence and dedication matter a great deal. The import of the evidence assembled in *August 1914* is unmistakable: the near-annihilation of General Samsonov's army at Tannenberg was eminently avoidable. The disaster was demonstrably a result of ineptitude, obtuseness, and irresponsibility on the part of the Russian military leadership. The issue is joined in a passage where a top-level military careerist invokes Kutuzov's intuitive passivity as an alibi for incompetence:

> General Blagoveshchensky was well aware of Kutuzov . . . like [the historic] Kutuzov, he was deliberate, cautious and sly, and like Tolstoy's Kutuzov he knew that it was never necessary to make any drastic or decisive moves, that a battle launched against its will would produce mere confusion . . . that there was an inevitable course of events and the best general was one who refused participation in these events.

It occurs to one that in taking issue with Tolstoy's fatalistic philosophy of history, Solzhenitsyn might be aiming at a more proximate target, notably the Marxist-Leninist brand of historical determinism. By the same token, it stands to reason that to one who has fully experienced the horrors of Stalin's personal rule, Tolstoy's dogmatic denial of the individual's role in history must seem less than persuasive.

AT TIMES THE CHALLENGE to the Soviet ethos is quite explicit. One of the salient strands in *August 1914* is an impatience with the shibboleths of the radical intelligentsia. As the story gets underway, Sanya Lozhenitsyn, a thoughtful young nonconformist inclined toward Tolstoyan pacifism, impulsively decides to enlist. An impressionable young girl who hitherto looked to him as her spiritual mentor is upset and baffled. She flings back at Sanya the rhetoric of the radical protest as she reminds him of the vileness of the Csarist establishment. "Where are your principles? Where is your consistency?" she cries indignantly. The usually voluble Sanya is reduced to incoherence; all he can do is mutter apologetically: "I feel sorry for Russia." Does this imply that, when the chips are down, "gut reactions" take precedence over abstract principles? So it seems. But let us note the phrasing. Clearly, Sanya's "patriotism" is a matter of compassion rather than national pride, of solidarity rather than flag-waving. It is not "my country—right or wrong," but a readiness to face the collective ordeal, to share the plight of millions of ordinary Russians.

Another relevant episode occurs at a later stage of the ill-fated campaign. A bedraggled band of survivors is trekking home through the East Prussian woods. Their leader, Colonel Vorotyntsov—a brave and independent-minded officer who comes as close as any character to being the hero of the novel—insists that the wounded comrades-in-arms be cared for and the dead be given a dignified burial. An articulate young Bolshevik, Sasha Lenartovich, balks at this exacting regimen. "Now you are forcing us to carry a corpse. Next thing you will order us to drag this [wounded] officer. And I can see just by looking at him that he is a reactionary." "Yes, I will," answers Vorotyntsov testily. "Party differences, lieutenant, are a ripple on the water." When Lenartovich asks "and which differences *are* important?" Vorotyntsov snaps: "the difference between decency and nondecency, lieutenant." Once again a basic moral code—that of courage, honor, solidarity—is given preference over political commitments and labels.

Some otherwise appreciative readers have noted with discomfort that this pervasive antipolitical bias asserts itself most frequently at the expense of the radicals. In fact, as various segments of the pre-1917 Russian society progressively enter the fray, the representatives of the Left, whether Marxist or otherwise, tend to come off somewhat worse than do nonideological mining engineers bent on develop-

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ing Russia's natural resources or religious thinkers playing down the importance of mere institutional change. As one who has had his fill of the spiritual aridities of a totally politicized culture, Solzhenitsyn knows only too well the cost of the doctrinaire narrow-mindedness that since the 1860s had been a persistent strain in the Russian radical tradition. (Needless to say, the phenomenon is not uniquely Russian: the scene in which radical girl students inveigh against the irrelevance of medieval studies has an uncomfortably familiar ring.) Yet in his recoil from the official Soviet travesty of that tradition, he runs the danger of doing less than justice to the liberating potential of the Russian revolutionary movement.

SUCH CONSIDERATIONS may be a trifle premature: Solzhenitsyn's journey into the recent past has merely begun. In the meantime, let us wish him strength in the face of persistent harassment, and salute, whatever our misgivings, the stubborn courage of his dual quest—a quest for the roots of Russia's present plight and for the sources of moral strength needed to overcome it. □

Marvin Kohl

Abortion and the Slippery Slope

Consider the question of whether or not we can correctly say that a human fetus is a human being. I am inclined to believe that a negative answer is correct. Others disagree. They maintain that the fetus is a human being and usually advance some version of the "slippery slope" argument in support of that claim.

The general form of the argument is that, since in the nature of things all change is discrete and continuous, lines or boundaries cannot be found, held, or adequately drawn. The version used in the abortion controversy says that the development of a human being from conception through birth into childhood is continuous and that to draw a line in this process is to make an arbitrary choice, a choice for which in the nature of things no good reason can be found or given. St. John-Stevas and others maintain that, since there is no qualitative difference between the embryo at the moment of conception and at the moment of quickening, the embryo must be considered a human being.[1]

AS I HAVE SUGGESTED elsewhere,[2] this argument is fallacious. I thought, and still think, that it makes about as much sense to say that a fetus is a human being as it does to say that an acorn is an oak tree.

The analogy runs as follows: If an acorn is destroyed has a tree been killed? I think not. Something has been killed. Admittedly, the living seed of an oak tree has been killed. But it is mere confusion to suggest that the killing of a seed of a tree is the same as killing a tree. The seed and the tree may both be members of the same growth form. But the seed is a member of the class of unborn progeny; the tree is not. Hence to say that a seed of an oak tree is an oak tree is to say (at least in part) that unborn progeny are born progeny.

An explanation was also advanced as to why speakers rarely make mistakes when talking about acorns and oak trees, but err when talking about more exalted matters. The assumption being made, which I regard as mistaken, is that the meaning of a compound noun is always the result of a simple combination of nonambiguous components and that this combination never involves a shift in meaning. I suggested that the word *being* is ambiguous:

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[1] Norman St. John-Stevas, *The Right to Life* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1964), p. 32. For similar arguments, see: T. Goodrich, "The Morality of Killing," *Philosophy*, April 1969, p. 137; John D. Dingell, U.S. *Congressional Record*, 91st Congress, 2d Sess., 1970, vol. 116, no. 182, pp. H10288–89.

[2] "Abortion and the Argument from Innocence," *Inquiry*, Summer 1971, pp. 149–51; "The Term 'Human Being' and the Problem of Abortion," *Names*, September 1971, pp. 221–22.

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being$_1$ signifies "that which has existence," while *being*$_2$ signifies "an individual that has or has had an independent nature capable of sustaining and regulating its own metabolic pattern (in short, nonspecific being and independent being). A fluent speaker, I went on to argue, would not say that every human fetus (being$_1$) is a human being$_2$ because he understands that in essence this is to assert that all unborn human progeny are born human progeny, and that this is self-contradictory. I continue to think it is enlightening to compare a fetus to an acorn, that it is self-contradictory to assert that every human fetus (being$_1$) is a human being$_2$, and that the lines drawn in the language reflect important distinctions. Not only are there objective differences, but I seriously doubt whether a pregnant woman or a mother would view the distinction between unborn and born progeny to be as arbitrary and unimportant as our "slippery slope" minded colleagues would have us believe. However, there is a point upon which I was mistaken. It was a mistake to believe that such fallacies occur simply because of semantic oversight or confusion.

LINES CAN BE, and are, reasonably drawn, especially in the case of material objects and related processes. Better yet and a stronger claim, for the fluent speaker,[3] all material object words and related processes denote perfectly determinate classes. When deciding whether or not something is to be named by linguistic items of this kind, the fluent speaker is never troubled by borderline cases. He, for example, has no difficulty in distinguishing water from ice, acorns from oak trees, and fetuses from born progeny.

Whether or not certain levels of language are perfectly determinate is not important; at least not in this context. What is important is that advocates of the "slippery slope" should be taking the opposite tack. If they were consistent they would argue that all material-object and related-process words are indeterminate or vague. But they do not. They do not, and I suspect would not, want to argue that we cannot reasonably distinguish red from orange, milk from cheese, and acorns from oak trees. But if this is the case, why should the "slippery slope" be used in the abortion debate? Why, so to speak "pick on" the term human being?

We do not have to look far for an answer. Bart Heffernan, in his Amicus Curiae Brief,[4] provides part of the explanation when he says that "Human life is a continuum, and if those at one end can be exterminated, why not those at the other?" [5] Or, as a colleague has asked: once you draw new lines, once you say it is permissible to kill human fetuses (that is, to kill less than fully potential human beings), then how does one limit the killing to that of fetuses? How does one hold the line and prevent the killing of the mentally retarded, the handicapped, the elderly, or members of any group who have not achieved, or have lost, their full potential as human beings?

As might be expected, we have an answer to our question, but the answer is less credulous than the original argument. Why is it that adequate lines can be drawn between permissible and nonpermissible killing, but cannot be drawn between born and unborn progeny? Is the line between permissible killing and nonpermissible killing more natural than the line between the unborn and the born? Is human life more of a continuum than a series of graded acts of killing? Moreover, why can't we hold the newly proposed line? If we can kill in self-defense, in capital punishment, and in wartime, if these exceptions can be made, then why can't abortion be another exception? Why is the line between a combatant and noncombatant in wartime (to choose just one example) easier to hold than the line between killing human fetuses and killing human beings?

The basic issue here is whether or not the idea of killing is contagious. That is, whether or not a person, group, or society—exposed to actual killing or the idea of sanctioned killing—universalizes and thereby extends this domain. I think this question is best answered in

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[3] A *fluent speaker* is "one who has perfect linguistic competence and whose performance matches that competence."

[4] Brief and Appendices of Dr. Bart Heffernan, Amicus Curiae in Support of Appellant. *United States of America vs. Milan Vuitch,* Supreme Court of the United States, October 1970, No. 84, pp. 1–45.

[5] *Ibid.,* p. 26.

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the negative: there is overwhelming evidence that human beings compartmentalize their ideas, and it is only when the normal process of compartmentalization breaks down that one encounters difficulties.[6]

This doesn't mean human beings don't make mistakes. But it does mean that in the normal process of generalization there are constraints. And one of the more important constraints is that the process is limited by the concept of "same kind or same class of objects." For example, if we crush an insect and believe this to be a permissible act, we do not conclude that it is permissible to kill all living things. We only conclude that it is permissible to kill that kind of insect, or at most, all kinds of insects. Similarly, if we are taught to kill Nazis and the criteria for a Nazi and the circumstances of permissible killings are clearly spelled out, we do not kill all German nationals (although of the possible mistakes this is probably the most likely). We do not mistakenly generalize and kill all Europeans. Nor do we proceed, either in fact or in mind, to kill all human beings.

Of course it would be absurd to deny that the ability to draw and hold conceptual lines is a function of intelligence. But the level of intelligence required is not high, and the man of average intelligence easily makes these distinctions and judgments. I say this because it is important to strike out against the view which maintains that new or heterodox views of morals ought not be considered or taught, because the masses are unintelligent. Although this is a favorite elitist tactic, it is, nonetheless, pernicious nonsense. □

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[6] For a treatment of this and related issues, see: the section on consequentialist arguments in my paper "The Sanctity of the Life Principle," *Humanistic Perspectives in Medical Ethics*, ed. Maurice Visscher (Buffalo: Prometheus Books), forthcoming.

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Erich Goode

Drugs and Consciousness

DRUGS AND THE PUBLIC, by Norman E. Zinberg and John A. Robertson. New York: Simon and Schuster. 288 pp. $8.95, paper $2.95.
THE NATURAL MIND: ANOTHER WAY OF LOOKING AT DRUGS AND THE HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS, by Andrew Weil. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. 229 pp. $5.95.

A key issue in looking at science sociologically is the way research findings become disseminated beyond the tiny band of specialists who generate them. This process of dissemination operates through a highly selective filter. What is known or believed at the researcher level is usually quite different from what is known or believed at the level of popularization—which is, in turn, usually quite different from what is known or believed by the public. Findings accepted as facts by research experts are often firmly disbelieved by the population at large. Thus, to understand science, we should be interested not only in how scientists come to accept certain propositions as true, but also in their reception by the society at large. Besides, there are often wide rifts among the researchers themselves. The age of scientists, for example, influences their world view and, consequently, their acceptance or rejection of certain classes of facts.

Research and public opinion on drug use illustrate these processes. A key guide to a great deal of past research on drugs has been the "pathology" model, neatly crystallized into the term "abuse," defined (and promulgated for decades) by the American Medical Association as *any drug use outside a medical context.* According to this model, nonmedical drug use is by definition "drug abuse." In its classic form, this view rested on the following elements:

(1) Users of illegal drugs are neurotic.

(2) The nonmedical use of drugs is dangerous both medically and psychiatrically.

(3) There are no beneficial features of nonmedical drug use.

(4) Drug use becomes the central fact of the lives of users, and it tends to take over, crowding out normal and valued activities.

(5) Anything that a drug user verbalizes about his or her drug experiences is irrational or epiphenomenal—unless, of course, it is negative and condemnatory, in which case, the user is being "realistic" and "rational."

Essential to this model was a radical disjunction between legal and illegal drug use. Only excessive and inappropriate use of legal drugs was considered "abuse," whereas any and all use of illegal drugs was defined as abuse. This model does not claim that drug "abuse" is in all cases harmful, nor that all drug "abusers" are neurotic—only that a generalization of pathology aptly typifies the phenomenon; using drugs nonmedically tends to be harmful, and drug users tend to be neurotic. Exceptions may be found to any rule, but knowing that an individual uses one or another drug outside a medical context immediately sends the researcher looking about for a medical or psychiatric pathology.

Today the pathology model lies in shambles.

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It collapsed first among researchers and next among practitioners and professional popularizers; but it remains strong among the public. Moreover, its demise has been gradual, according to the drug in question. That the overwhelming majority of marijuana users suffers no medical pathology of any kind has been accepted as fact among marijuana researchers for probably a half-dozen years. (A few mavericks, naturally, led the pack long before that.) The acceptance of this view among medical practitioners as of the early 1970s may be surmised from the following items. First, a study conducted recently among senior medical students showed that the majority had tried marijuana; about 90 percent felt the drug did not significantly impair the user's physical health, while not quite four-fifths said that the marijuana user's mental health was not significantly impaired by use of the drug. At least some of the younger medical practitioners hold that, as applied to marijuana, the pathology model is archaic. Second, consider the fact that articles on marijuana published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in the 10 or 20 years prior to 1971 almost without exception conformed to the classic pathology mold; but in 1971, a number of *JAMA* articles stressed the nonpathological and even beneficial side of the drug. Third, the AMA, which could always be counted on to supply anti-marijuana tracts to bolster the legitimacy of the pathology litany, has recently adopted a resolution bordering on the legalization of the use and possession of small quantities of marijuana. Only a few years ago, these developments would have been inconceivable.

ANDREW WEIL AND NORMAN ZINBERG have been key figures in the wrecking crew that has annihilated the pathology edifice. In a crucial and widely publicized experiment published in *Science* in December 1968, they established that among experienced users and in the doses typically taken, marijuana tends not to impair mechanical coordination or intellectual functioning. Subsequent experiments have produced mixed results and have qualified the validity of the Weil-Zinberg experiment. But the fact that their nonpathological findings were published in the country's leading science journal said more about sentiment within the scientific community on marijuana in general than it did about whether these, specifically, were regarded as right or not. (A similar experiment with similar findings was rejected at about the same time by the *JAMA*, and later published in *Science*, which may say something about the rift at that time between researchers and practitioners.)

Weil and Zinberg also published a paper in Britain's leading science journal, *Nature*, which, judging from the tests administered, suggested that casual and moderate marijuana users appeared to have entirely normal personalities and were far more similar in a wide range of respects to nonusers than they were to chronic marijuana users.[1] Weil, independently, also published a major clinical piece in 1970 in the *New England Journal of Medicine* that rasped the grain of nearly all previous work in the clinical tradition. Weil found adverse psychic reactions to marijuana to be extremely infrequent, and those that do come to the attention of the psychiatrist to be, overwhelmingly, mere panic reactions—usually magnified in severity by inept physicians who act as if they are witnessing a full-blown psychosis. (Somehow, the *Washington Post* managed to summarize this article with the following headline: "Virginia Doctor's Study Indicates Use of Pot Is Harmful.") These publications, in addition to several others, have made significant contributions to the scientific and medical literature on marijuana use and have bestowed an antidote to the naive moralizing that has been passed off for so long as objective medical science.

This process of demythologizing has been much slower in regard to the use of the so-called hard drugs, especially heroin. After all, anyone who has even the most superficial acquaintance with the world of heroin addiction is capable of verifying the pathology

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[1] This article touched off an enormous blunder by the press—illustrating the axiom that pathology is news while normality is not. One sentence read, describing chronic users: "There were no signs of intellectual deterioration." A typographical error was committed by *Nature*, and the word "no" was accidentially omitted. The next day, the *Washington Post* ran a story bearing the headline: "Daily Pot Smokers Erode in Intellect, Researchers Claim."

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model by casual observation. Junkies usually are very much in need of medical attention—death from an overdose is almost a fixture of the junkie subculture and could come seconds after any shot they take. Their lives revolve about acquiring and using their drug of choice. And it would seem that anyone who chose to live the wretched sort of lives most junkies lead simply had to be neurotic.

With the explosion of psychedelic drug use, especially LSD, in the early and middle 1960s, another rich mine for the pathology machine was discovered. Certainly the hallucinogenic drug experience departed sufficiently from normal, everyday mentality to be considered ipso facto pathological. Indeed, Albert Hoffman, the discoverer of LSD and its very first user, declared, "This drug makes normal people psychotic." The earliest efforts of LSD medical and psychiatric researchers were directed toward examining parallels between the psychedelic experience and schizophrenia—with the hope that the key to the latter could be found in the former. And in the spring of 1967 an even more dreadful specter loomed upon the drug scene: the threat of genetic mutilation. Back then, this was one item even the druggies believed.

Certainly the pathology model would appear to be an accurate typification of a large segment of those using drugs more potent than marijuana.

The Natural Mind and *Drugs and the Public* argue persuasively that most of the basic features of the pathology model do not even apply to the nonmedical use of "dangerous" drugs. Indeed, both books take one step further and point out how many of the features of the hard-drug scene that everyone, users and nonusers alike, would find repugnant are a direct consequence of the law and its enforcement, and not of the biochemical action of the drugs themselves.

Norman Zinberg and John Robertson, a lawyer, have written a sober, measured, rational, but damning critique of prevailing drug policies and enforcement practices. It is a fallacy of reification to assume that things that are found together inevitably belong together. In the U.S., the junkie is often sick, stands a strong chance of dying from an overdose of heroin, and commits a monstrous number of predatory crimes. A few avant-garde researchers have maintained for decades that these pathological aspects of the heroin scene had little to do with the drug itself but a great deal with the problems in which junkies inevitably were entangled; now, and probably only now, has this view become dominant among those who research dangerous drug use. Perhaps in a few years, it will trickle out to those who make use of and broadcast this information. But it is clear that among policymakers and the public—to whom *Drugs and the Public* is addressed—the notion that, somehow, there is some black magic in heroin that causes illness, death, criminality, and a kind of character degeneration is almost unshakable.

Zinberg and Robertson have assembled a devastating review of this fallacy. "In our opinion," they write, "laws defining drug use as antisocial have intensified the very trends the law was intended to curb. . . ." By now, it would appear that any sane observer would be forced to admit that we have committed a ghastly mistake in the narcotics area, and that a considerable move away from our past punitive policies has to be made before any improvement can be effected. The authors also pinpoint sources of public and official unwillingness to change or acknowledge past mistakes. (In some quarters, harsher penalties are called for as a solution.) They present what could be viable alternatives. The British, for instance, after a restructuring and tightening of their policy in 1967 (subsequent to a massive nearly ten-fold rise in the number of addicts during the early and middle 1960s) have managed to level off their addict population at the rate of about 5 percent of that in the U.S. The most recent figures indicate that the number continues to grow in this country. Britain's legislation, of course, only covers narcotics addiction. British laws dealing with other drugs are similar to ours and this is one reason why we both have similar problems with nonnarcotics.

Weil concurs with the conclusion that the drug laws are iatrogenic—and the drugs themselves relatively nontoxic. His chapter "Is Anything Wrong With It?" is the most lucid, vigorous, and informative discussion I have read pointing out the inadequacies of the obsolete pathology school of thought. One ex-

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ample: except for overdosing—itself a deformed offspring of the drug's illegality—heroin is far less damaging medically than alcohol, our most widely used intoxicant drug. "If heroin could be isolated from its context in our society, we would soon see that the drug per se is relatively innocuous from the purely medical point of view. . . . Regular use of heroin, even for many years, does not in itself preclude good physical health. . . . So much for the worst of all drugs." Another example: LSD, we now know, is an extremely weak mutagen, and does not significantly alter chromosomes at the dosages typically taken by humans.[2] A third example: the proportion of users who experience frightening and undesired psychotic episodes under the influence of any drug commonly taken "is minuscule." Fourth: the concept of "psychic dependence," or "psychological addiction," is little more than a pejorative judgment made by a person about "someone who does something repeatedly because he likes it."

In short, "the medical harmlessness of most classes of illegal intoxicants—particularly the hallucinogens and marihuana—is remarkable. . . . Drugs do not hurt the body in the ways most physicians think; they do not hurt the mind in ways most psychiatrists think. . . ." Weil agrees wholeheartedly with Zinberg and Robertson in holding our narcotics legislation and enforcement responsible for more damage than the drugs themselves could possibly do: "I cannot help feeling that what we are doing in the name of stopping the drug problem *is* the drug problem."

ZINBERG AND ROBERTSON are primarily interested in sketching out the lineaments of the drug scene, pointing out the destructiveness of the laws, and suggesting alternative policies. For Weil, these concerns only lay the groundwork for a far more ambitious undertaking. Weil develops what amounts to a general theory of consciousness, centered on a contrast between our normal, everyday mentality with the drug-induced high as the fulcrum. His theory progresses through the following points.

[2] Over 100 research reports have been summarized in an excellent review of the LSD-chromosome question in an article by Dishotsky, et al., in the April 30, 1971, issue of *Science*. Its conclusions concur with Weil's.

One of today's most brilliant minds considers the ways in which his fellow intellectuals relate to the politics, society, and mass culture which surround them

The Intellectuals and the Powers & Other Essays

Edward Shils

Edward Shils is professor of sociology and social thought at the University of Chicago and fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge. After World War II he taught at the London School of Economics where many of the students were from the intellectual elite of Asia, Africa, and the West Indies. He was closely associated with the American scientists of the Manhattan Project and helped found the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. He has, therefore, moved among those intellectuals who have concerned themselves with crucial problems of their societies.

The essays in this volume reflect Shils' belief that effective collaboration between intellectuals and the powers that govern society is essential even though the tensions between them may never be eliminated.

The essays are grouped in three areas: intellectuals and the institutionalization of intellectual production; the intellectual in advanced cultures; and the problems of the intellectual in underdeveloped countries. This is volume 1 in the *Selected Papers of Edward Shils.* $12.50

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(1) Humans are born with an instinct to alter and suspend their ordinary everyday consciousness; chemical intoxication is one species of a broad variety of techniques of moving into and experiencing a "stoned" existence.

> It is my belief [Weil writes] that the desire to alter consciousness periodically is an innate, normal drive analogous to hunger or the sex drive. . . . [The] omnipresence of the phenomenon argues that we are dealing not with something socially or culturally based but rather with a biological characteristic of the species. . . . [It] looks like a real drive arising from the neurophysiological structure of the human brain.

(2) Although in some societies this drive is given legitimate expression, in Western society there are very few accepted avenues of transcendence. Thus, this basic, elemental, normal, and instinctual—and potentially valuable—drive is repressed. Weil feels that these efforts at social control are probably impossible "and might be dangerous."

(3) All drugs are, to use Weil's term, "active placebos." "Drugs only appear to work," he writes. Mind-altering chemicals are a kind of trigger, a catalyst; they accord a tiny push in the direction the mind already wants to go. There is a dialectical relationship between a drug's "effects" and the consequent response to them by the mind—which then turns them into further "effects." In fact, seen in this light, strictly speaking, specific drug effects do not exist. Moreover, there is no subjective effect following the ingestion of chemicals which cannot be achieved through meditation, Yoga, Zen. Thinking that highs come in pills or joints or shots is, according to Weil, an error.

(4) Drawing a parallel between drug-induced states of consciousness stemming from within, and not without, and the etiology of illness, Weil holds that

> all illness is psychosomatic. . . . [The] physical manifestations of illness . . . are always effects, while the causes lie within the realm of the mind. . . . [The] disease processes seem to me to be initiated always by changes in consciousness. In the case of infectious illness, the initial causative change is not that germs appear to attack the body but that something happens in the person that permits a breakdown in the normal harmonious balance between the body and the microorganisms surrounding it.

Illness, Weil believes, is caused by a breakdown in the dialogue between the conscious mind and the unconscious. The key to healing lies not in dealing with the superficial external manifestations of illness, but lies in

> the restoration of the natural state of openness between the conscious and unconscious minds—the reintegration of consciousness, whose disintegration leads to illness in the first place. The responsibility for this achievement rests ultimately with the sick person. . . . The power to heal like the power to make ill resides in the patient.

THESE FOUR POINTS are neatly tied together by Weil's analysis of materialism—or what he calls "straightland." The drug-dependent are guilty of precisely the same empirical error as are the moral entrepreneurs who attempt to criminalize drug use out of existence: they both think it is the drug itself that is responsible for doing things—for good or ill—to people. Both are victims of the "materialistic illusion." "The essence of materialism is the attribution of causality to external, physical reality." The "magic" of drugs "resides within the mind of the user and not in the drugs." Whatever detriments or benefits that seem to come from drugs can actually be achieved by the mind alone; with training, they could be eliminated while still using drugs—or brought on without them. The fact that Weil and other transcendentalists have arrived where they are can in part be attributed to their experience with psychedelic drugs—but the possibility should be explored that this stage can be eliminated altogether; others should be trained in the art of getting high without drugs.

Weil believes that "straightland"—the thinking that underpins materialism—is responsible for society's most serious and catastrophic problems, such as warfare, ecological rape, racism, political upheaval, and a medical practice that kills and maims more often than it heals. On the other hand, "stonesville"—appreciation of and belief in the validity of non-ordinary, intuitive, altered states of consciousness—can be a fruitful means of dealing with, and moving beyond, these problems. The materialistic pseudo-solutions we now apply merely fumble about with the most superficial manifestations of the problems, thereby escalating their seriousness—the solution becom-

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ing a major part of the problem. "Stoned" thinking, in contrast, deals with problems profoundly, starting within the mind of humankind.

In sum, Weil feels that "the limits to what human consciousness can cause in the physical body are far beyond where most of us imagine them to be." The key to it all is the realization that our reality is not "out there," in the stars, but "in here," within the mentality of each of us. Humanity's ability to transform its environment from within, through masterly and systematic meditative techniques, is almost limitless. An extreme case of the internality of reality would, of course, be the psychotic—who, at present, lacks the ability to control this teeming inner world—of whom Weil writes:

> [The] positive potential of psychotics [is] a potential so overwhelming that I am almost tempted to call psychotics the evolutionary vanguard of our species. They possess the secret of changing reality by changing the mind; if they can learn to use that talent for creative ends, there are no limits to what they can accomplish.

I simply do not know how to relate to *The Natural Mind*. There are times when I feel that it is one of the most creative, daring, and exciting works on drug use published in the past few years. At other times I remind myself that, although the errors of the large-minded are more fruitful and interesting than the accurate but petty facts of the small-minded, there are serious flaws in the book's analysis. I have the sense that Weil is up to something, but I am not altogether sure what it is. It is certain that the book will be attacked, dismissed, or ignored by members of the scientific and medical fraternity, even (or perhaps especially?) by those who found Dr. Weil's earlier essays informative and useful. It is my belief that our most worthwhile ideas stem from theorists whose work is initially regarded as outrageous, but their contributions are felt only after more cautious thinkers have refined and retranslated them into slightly more conventional terms. At this point I would, therefore, like to register a few of my objections to *The Natural Mind*.

The most fundamental thesis in Weil's book —we could be much more than we actually are—is old hat, but always worth reiterating. The fact that psychedelic drugs may be a path to enlightenment and liberation certainly had its heyday a few years back. (Although if this is such an obvious notion, why don't granting agencies fund research to establish centers designed to teach young people to turn on with maximum profit and minimum damage?) Anyone who feels, as I do, that human possibilities are almost unlimited will grant the worthiness of any serious and systematic effort to explore various means of realizing them. But I believe that Weil is dead wrong in attributing the locus of the prime mover in the neurological workings of the human organism. He invokes strictly behavioristic metaphors in positing an "instinct" to get high, a biological (as opposed to chemical) cause for subjective drug experiences, a cerebral etiology of illness. It would seem to me to be far more fruitful (as well as consistent with Weil's general theme) to hold the locus of causality to be variable, an empirical question.

Certainly enough well-designed experiments in real-life situations have been conducted comparing the effects of "active placebos" with test drugs to convince anyone that drugs have "real" subjective effects—highly variable, to be sure, highly sensitive to set and setting, but certainly far from limitless. And why invoke instincts? An "instinct" to get high? How does this strengthen the argument? Why not say that the possibility of developing the desire to alter one's consciousness is wide open—that humans can move in any direction their civilization encourages them to go? This tabula rasa thesis gives more power to Weil's argument because it is less determined by inexorable forces—and, at the same time, is consistent with a developing line of social-psychological thinking. After all, if we throw out the reifying constraints of instincts of all kinds—the maternal instinct, the aggressive, or "killer," instinct, the male-bonding instinct, the male dominance instinct, even the sexual instinct—we then have an intellectual system that demystifies human behavior in the extreme, and opens the gates to considering the validity of an incredible range of utopias.

Weil's is a radical denunciation of Western allopathic medicine. Yes, many medical practitioners threaten the lives of their patients. Yes, American physicians have closed themselves off from Eastern healing practices, and have a great deal to learn from them—witness

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their stunned realization that acupuncture can actually work. And yes, many allopathic techniques do generate, eventually, more virulent diseases. But to ignore the fact that members of societies armed with Western-style allopathic techniques live longer, healthier lives than members of societies without them is to miss a fundamental truth about healing. In his excessive zeal, Weil has put himself into an untenable position and has weakened the credibility of his basic argument. What we really want is a dialogue between "straightland" and "stonesville," and not a total embargo on communication. Many who have the most to learn from *The Natural Mind* won't, and that is in large part Weil's own fault.

Still under 30, Weil has produced a long series of scientific, medical, and popular articles of high quality. At this moment, while most of his Harvard Medical School classmates are finishing their residency training, Weil is in the jungles of Southern Mexico and Central and South America, puzzling over, and participating in, the use of psychoactive botanicals by tribal peoples. By the time his classmates embark on lucrative and prestigious careers, Weil will be studying Yoga with India's holiest. The traditional field of medicine has always accidentally turned out a few heretics, but their numbers have been minuscule and scattered. It now seems certain that the medical profession has on its hands substantial numbers of young physicians who are challenging traditional medicine and its collusion in prevailing social and economic arrangements. True, the zeal of some is a bit excessive, misdirected. But medicine stands to gain by absorbing some of its most interesting and avant-garde younger members.

Of course, Weil could in no conceivable way be seen as a political radical—in fact, he regards the radical route as another manifestation of materialism and "straight" thinking. Radicals, in counterpoint, would regard Weil's theories as bourgeois idealism, escapism, even counterrevolutionary mysticism. But I feel that both approaches, in their critiques of the smug destructiveness of traditional medicine, and its role in society, may very well be seedbeds for future developments. We will lose, I think, if Weil's theories elicit from us an automatic rejection. They deserve to be taken seriously. □

Samuel Levenson

Irish Rebel

THE MIND OF AN ACTIVIST: JAMES CONNOLLY, by Owen Dudley Edwards. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan. 132 pp. £1.–.

The University of Edinburgh professor who wrote this book considers James Connolly (1868–1916) the most remarkable thinker of Ireland's most remarkable period. Most historians agree.

Born in an Irish ghetto in Edinburgh, Connolly grew up burdened by unimpressive stature, bowlegs, a squint, a stammer, and an accent that stamped him as an outsider in Ireland and in every Irish community outside of Scotland. With only three years of formal education, he became a convincing speaker, an editor, historian, pamphleteer, and effective labor organizer.

Connolly left school at the age of ten to eke out the family funds by working in a tile plant, bakery, and print shop. At 14 he joined the British Army, and first set foot in Ireland when his regiment was stationed there in 1882. In Dublin he fell in love with a Protestant domestic. When his regiment was ordered overseas, shortly before Connolly's seven-year term of enlistment expired, he preferred to desert, marry Lillie Reynolds in a Roman Catholic ceremony, and return to Edinburgh.

Following in the footsteps of his father and older brother, Connolly became a carter (teamster) for the Edinburgh sanitation department. When that job petered out, he opened a shoe repair shop that soon failed. Babies started to arrive.

Connolly's conversion to nationalism and class struggle was simplified because the Socialist parties of that era were the only ones willing to accept the doctrine of Irish national liberation. These parties not only shared Connolly's discontent with existing conditions but also explained how and why these conditions came about—a matter of importance to a man like Connolly, so inherently clamorous for logi-

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cal explanation. Avid reading and much listening to street-corner orators did the rest.

In 1896, at the age of 28, Connolly left Scotland to become executive secretary of a Socialist club in Dublin. For seven years he tried to establish an Irish Socialist Republican party that would be as big as its name. He and his handful of long-haired youthful followers participated with Maud ("Mad") Gonne, Yeats's beloved, in demonstrations against ceremonies marking the 60th anniversary of Queen Victoria's reign; in protests against the Boer War; and in distributing the first of Connolly's periodicals, the *Workers' Republic*. Connolly also spoke before Scottish and English branches of the Social Democratic Federation and the Independent Labour party.

In 1903, after returning to Dublin from a three-month tour of the U.S. sponsored by Daniel De Leon's Socialist Labor party, Connolly had a falling-out with his Irish comrades. They had infuriated him by dissipating on an unprofitable drinking club the funds he had collected in the U.S. for subscriptions to the party's publication. The members, in turn, could no longer tolerate Connolly's "bossing" ways. He returned to the U.S. in bitterness and sorrow, and the party in Ireland became defunct.

Connolly had anticipated getting a job as a printer with the company that published the SLP journals and pamphlets. When it failed to materialize, he sold insurance in Troy, New York, for the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. He never liked America. He disliked its climate, the bragging of its citizens, their lack of respect for the law, their unbridled individualism, their admiration for the cheat who made good. He was also disappointed in the Socialist Labor party. The only party with the potential for converting the U.S. to socialism was being crippled, he thought, by the egotism of De Leon, the "Marxist Pope." The two men engaged in a lengthy feud that ended with De Leon calling Connolly an agent of the Jesuits and getting him censured and expelled.

During his years in the U.S. (1903–10), Connolly worked as a machinist for a plant that manufactured Singer sewing machines, and as a paid national organizer first for the Industrial Workers of the World and then the Socialist party. He also established an organization of Irish-American Socialists and edited its publi-

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cation *The Harp*. But his chief accomplishment was to write his best pamphlets: *Labor in Irish History*, which examined revolutionary movements of the past, and *Labor, Nationality and Religion*, which asserted that the Catholic clergy had "forgotten or ignored the fact that the laity are a part of the Church."

After returning to Ireland, Connolly became Belfast organizer for the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union founded by Jim Larkin. At the 1912 meeting of the Irish Trades Union Congress, he proposed the resolution establishing the Irish Labor party, and in 1913 directed the great Dublin strike and lock-out while Larkin was in jail.

When Larkin, exhausted by internal and external conflicts, went off to America, Connolly remained behind to rebuild the shattered union. The decision of Socialist parties throughout the world to support their own governments in World War I, and the postponement of Home Rule led Connolly, in rage and bitterness, to concentrate on strengthening the Irish Citizens' Army, established originally to defend the strikers of 1913. In January 1916 Connolly came to terms with extremist leaders of the Irish Volunteers (formed as a counterweight to Carson's Ulster Volunteers); and on Easter Monday, with Padraic Pearse on one side and Joseph Mary Plunkett on the other, he led a combined army of a thousand men to throw the British out of Ireland. The Rising failed to create any patriotic fervor among the Irish, but the execution of its leaders and the imprisonment of hundreds of insurgents started the course of events that led ultimately to the present independent Irish Republic.

PROFESSOR EDWARDS has done a good job in describing the basic elements of Connolly's thought. He is particularly brilliant in explaining why Connolly participated in a rebellion that was not designed to overthrow capitalism and that was doomed to defeat in any case. But Edwards's portrait of Connolly as an enlightened liberal Catholic is far from accurate. Connolly had no trace of religious sensibility in his makeup and, indeed, little interest in the whole subject. He chided his Socialist comrades for expressing atheistic doctrines for the very practical reason that such expressions turned off the very people whom he was trying to organize and lead. On the night before he was executed, Connolly did indeed take the last rites but only, one suspects, as a gesture of solidarity with his men.

In any case, the question would seem to be settled by a paragraph in a letter that Connolly, then almost 40, wrote to a comrade in Scotland: "For myself, though I have usually posed as a Catholic I have not gone to my duty for 15 years, and have not the slightest tincture of faith left. I only assumed the Catholic pose in order to quiz the raw freethinkers whose ridiculous dogmatism did and does annoy me as much as the dogmatism of the Orthodox. In fact, I respect the good Catholic more than the average freethinker." □

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On "Radicalizing" Our Students

"The Radicalizing of a Teacher of Literature," by Ellen Cantarow. CHANGE, May 1972.

Though the energies of the radical student movement seem to have ebbed, thousands of "movement people" are still seeking ways to act upon their often valid critique of American society. Many of them are now, degrees in their pockets, teaching at universities and trying to relate their academic training to their political thought. One such person, Ellen Cantarow, a Wellesley and Harvard graduate, here describes her experience as student, revolutionary, and college instructor.

As an English major at Wellesley, Cantarow learned the techniques of the New Criticism without, she claims, being able to relate them to the feelings she experienced while reading. As a graduate student, she found that "literature became a professional ego cult." She felt alienated because she was taught that literature deals in universals unrelated to her personal experience.

The Movement, especially the women's movement, gave meaning to her education. "To realize that events had real causes, and to know that our lives were governed by real political and historical influences, was enormously liberating for the way we understood our own experience in relation to history and politics." Sympathizing with the Czech freedom struggle helped her to realize that "at the heart of every great piece of literature was some profound human truth. It became natural for me to question the political and social assumptions embodied by the literature I read." She discovered, for example, that William Butler Yeats's "sorrow, his resignation, his fatalism, his nostalgia were treacherous. They were the patronizing sentiments of the pious bourgeois who bemoaned the falling away of misguided souls from the light. I identified not with the poet, but with those people of whose revolutionary activity Yeats had written only that it had turned their hearts to stone. Indeed, I understood that revolutionary activity might in fact embitter one, turn one's heart to stone, but it was surely not the resignation, the dreamy sorrow, the pious, paternalistic lament of poetry like Yeats's that would turn such bitterness to confidence. Another kind of art was needed."

With this realization, Cantarow turned to teaching, so as to "change our students' experience and their conception of what they will do in life . . . to construct with . . . students new, revolutionary ideas of culture. . . ." But her experience at the University of Massachusetts at Boston was not altogether satisfying. She had her "petty-bourgeois and working-class English composition classes read Big Bill Haywood's *Autobiography,* hoping to stir them through its "proletarian" style. The students' reaction was mixed. Many did not even read the book; others found it boring; a few were intrigued. On the whole, most saw the book as remote from their experience.

Cantarow's account is an absorbing one, with flashes of intelligence, and it thereby reveals all the more the faults of political snobbism and the elitism that characterize many New Left academics. A few points of comment:

1) Her account of Yeats's poetry inspires no confidence in her capacity to read. To speak of this great writer's poems as "the patronizing sentiments of the pious bourgeois" is to rouse memories of Michael Gold on

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Thornton Wilder and Granville Hicks on the whole of American literature. Evidently, a process of gross vulgarization has occurred that cripples the no doubt impressive abilities of people like Cantarow.

2) Revolutionary though she takes herself to be, Cantarow shows a painful lack of concrete historical knowledge and tact when she assigns Big Bill Haywood's *Autobiography* to her freshman comp students. Haywood's book has historical value, but it can hardly be offered as a model to young people who need to be taught the rudiments of writing English prose. Still more, if people like Cantarow troubled to find out something about the real-life experiences of actual, living American workers and lower-middle-class people and about the children they send to college, it would become clear that in a city like Boston, where there is a large population of Irish and other ethnic groups, many of them members of the AFL–CIO building trade and craft unions, the Wobblyism of Haywood (whatever its romantic appeal to the children of the bourgeoisie) is likely to seem alien, perhaps even incomprehensible. If Cantarow was interested in actually making contact with her students, rather than *imposing* upon them her own ready-made ideology, she would almost certainly have chosen another text.

3) Cantarow has no belief in the humanistic tradition of education that has been sustained over the years both by the liberal and socialist outlooks. "The apology of liberal ideology," she writes, "is that literature 'enriches' one's life. But this explanation turns literature into an adornment, an isolable unit that confirms the sterility of life under capitalism. The explanation presupposes a natural order in which only one kind of experience is 'rich,' existing solely to 'enrich' all other experience, which is thin and poor. It is then possible to accept work, for example, as something that is naturally burdensome, onerous or sterile, because there is always that other part of experience the given nature of which is to divert one from work."

This is feeble, both logically and historically. To say that literature enriches life—which, indeed, it does—is not at all to reduce it to "an adornment"; on the contrary, it is to insist on its centrality, its moral and social urgency. But it is also to insist that it has an autonomous existence, an independent value, which is not to be debased by efforts to put it at the service of one or another party or movement. Nor is it true, as Cantarow suggests, that such a view of literature becomes a way of reconciling human beings to onerous or sterile work, by providing them with elevated "diversions." If she were to acquaint herself with the history of European and American socialism during their heroic periods, that is, at about the turn of the century, she would learn that it was precisely the workers whose imaginations were stirred by reading Tolstoy and Ibsen and Chekhov and Hauptmann who were inclined to be most fervent in their socialist beliefs. For they came to see that there was a great cultural heritage, one that should be available to all humanity, but a heritage of which class society had cheated them and that socialism promised to make universal.

More could be said, a great deal more, in criticism of Cantarow's opinions, which are neither better nor worse than those of other young New Leftists who mistake their elitist preconceptions for revolutionary intransigeance. But more important is the fact that she shows no particular signs of learning from her sad experiences at the U. of Mass. Rather than attributing her teaching difficulties to inexperience or her own shortcomings, Cantarow blames the isolation of radicals on campus: "The absence on the campus of radical activities that might arouse their [the students'] sympathies and galvanize their energies ensured, moreover, that the Left would continue to be remote from their experience." In other words, to make her courses more successful, Cantarow proposes to organize a campus movement, rather than change her teaching approach!

One would give a penny or two for *Change*, a magazine dealing with educational problems, to find those students who had to submit to Cantarow's unearned certainties and to ask them what *they* thought of her ways of teaching. At a time when everyone prates about participatory democracy, it would be fascinating to hear from some of "the raw material," the victims of "false consciousness," who were the object of Cantarow's experiment. Is it at all conceivable that some of them might feel they had been manipulated?

DAVID BENSMAN □

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LETTERS

Communists & the Miners

Editor:

Theodore Draper, whose self-esteem has risen with the passing years as he continues to receive the adulation of those whose criterion for scholarship is anti-Communism with footnotes, ridicules my assertion that the Trade Union Unity League was formed, in part, by expulsions of Communists and other left-wing militants inside the AFL. (See "The Communists and the Miners," Spring 1972.) Scornfully he notes that the last expulsions occurred in 1923. However, there is the slight fact that on March 2, 1927, 37 Communist and left-wing officials of the New York Joint Board of the International Fur Workers' Union (AFL) and locals 1, 5, 10, and 15, comprising the bulk of the International's membership, were expelled from membership in the union. About the same time, the leading left-wing locals in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union were expelled. Since the needle trades' unions comprised the major force of what was left in the Trade Union Educational League, the expulsions as late as 1927–28 were certainly an important factor in the conclusion reached by Communists and their allies that they could no longer function inside the AFL to seek changes in the policies of the Federation, changes which Draper himself concedes were long overdue, and that they had to organize outside the Federation.

When Draper gets around to revising his article, he might consult *The Coal Digger,* the official organ of the National Miners' Union, a file of which is in the Columbia University Library.

PHILIP S. FONER

THEODORE DRAPER *replies:*

In his original version, Foner tried to put over the idea that "the TUUL was not viewed by its founders as a 'dual union'. . . ." He maintained that it was "simply a means of advancing the program of organizing the unorganized until the progressive forces once again gained influence in the A. F. of L." The main issue, then, was whether the TUUL was conceived of as a dual union. Did the founders merely want to gain influence in the AFL or did they seek to destroy it and take its place? On this basic point, Foner now has nothing to say in his own defense. In fact, he admits that the "Communists and their allies" decided that "they could no longer function inside the AFL." This reads suspiciously like a confession that the Communists did view the TUUL as a dual union.

In my article, I wrote that "the most notable case" of an expulsion of a Communist by the AFL was that of William F. Dunne in 1923. Foner has changed my "most notable case" into "the last expulsions occurred in 1923." The most charitable thing that might be said about this change of "most notable" into "last" is that it is a case of curious carelessness. In any event, Dunne was expelled by an AFL convention, by the AFL itself. The fur and garment workers' expulsions were the result of a murderous internecine struggle for power in those unions only. The circumstances were peculiar to the needle trades.

I was thinking of AFL expulsions similar to that of Dunne. There may well have been some misunderstanding here. But the real issue is something else. It is whether the American Communists decided to organize the TUUL as a result of their "expulsion from the AFL unions," as Foner put it originally. In his letter, Foner has wisely retreated from this extreme position. The expulsions have now become no more than "an important factor." This is a welcome improvement. But it is not good enough.

It is an undeniable, irrevocable fact that virtually the entire Amerian Communist leadership, especially William Z. Foster, opposed turning the TUEL into a dual union on the order of the TUUL. The decision was made in Moscow. It was based on an international perspective, not on the American garment industry. The American Communists certainly did not consider the garment trades' expulsions as "an important factor" to justify a dual trade-union center or they would not have opposed the latter as long as they dared to do so.

I repeat: The issues posed by Foner originally were whether the Communists conceived of the TUUL as a dual union and whether the expulsions had anything to do with the decision in Moscow. On the first point, Foner seems to have quietly resigned himself to the truth, and on the second point, he has made a partial retraction that is still far from the truth.

As for Foner's recommendation that I should revise my article on the basis of *The Coal Digger,* I refuse to believe that he can be serious. The Columbia University file starts with vol. I, no. 5 (dated April 1, 1928), skips immediately to vol. I, no. 12, and ends with March 1930 (the last two issues were apparently misplaced). Thus the file runs out just as the National Miners' Union began to organize seriously. The first NMU strike of consequence took place in 1931. *The Coal Digger* is no help at all to find out what was really happening to the union.

There is one more point. If one were to say that Foner is a veteran practitioner of "Communism with footnotes," a cry of "McCarthyism" would undoubtedly be raised. But it is perfectly all right for Foner to say that I receive adulation for "anti-Communism with footnotes." One comes across this double standard all the time. The Foners of this world are not really opposed to the technique of "McCarthyism"; they merely wish to have a monopoly of it, with impunity. □

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Re Calumet Community Congress

Editor:

Richard Krickus's article in the Winter 1972 DISSENT contains an account of the organization of the Calumet Community Congress in Lake County, Indiana. This article romanticizes and misrepresents an important organizational effort. I should like to correct some of its inaccuracies.

To begin with, Hammond was founded before not after Gary, and the Memorial Day Massacre before the gates of Republic Steel in South Chicago took place in 1937 not 1936.

Next, the victories of the CCC are much exaggerated:

1. There was no comprehensive settlement with suburban developers, as the article suggests.
2. The effort to build community support for discharged teachers in Hanover Township failed.
3. Credit for the amendment to bring U.S. Steel's coke ovens under the Gary air pollution ordinance belongs not to CCC but to another organization, CARP (Community Action to Reverse Pollution). CARP worked for months on the issue, enlisted the support of a long list of community organizations, and its members personally visited city councilmen. The CCC won a share of the glory by appearing at the city council meeting which passed the amendment, but played a very secondary role in the struggle.
4. The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law abandoned interest in a suit to force U.S. Steel to pay its fair share of taxes about a year ago, when it became clear that the Hatcher administration was not sufficiently interested to put up money for the suit.
5. The trailer court issue in Lowell was lost, not won.

I happen to know these things because I was staff director of the group of organizers which created the CCC from June 1970 until just before its founding convention in December 1970. I took on this task at the request of the two organizers Krickus mentions, Jim Wright and Mike Barnes. In November 1970 I returned the staff directorship to Jim Wright. It was I who was the principal target of red-baiting by the local Democratic party machine. One of Jim Wright's first acts after the successful founding convention on December 5, 1970, was to ask me to withdraw from the organizing staff.

Thus, like many of the radical organizers who built the CIO, I became expendable as soon as the new institution—in this case the CCC—was securely founded. It would misrepresent the history of the CCC if for that reason I were to become an "un person" in written accounts of what happened. It would also misrepresent the history of the CCC to suggest that it stood up strongly against red-baiting. Instead, like other organizations with which the Industrial Areas Foundation and the Catholic Church have been associated, it caved in to red-baiting.

Finally, it is misleading in an article published in winter 1972 to suggest that all is well with the CCC and that it offers a model for other working-class communities to follow. On February 10, 1972, long-standing dissension resulted in the withdrawal of 14 of 18 members of the CCC Executive Committee, including its president and first vice-president. They have now formed a new organization, the Calumet Action League (CAL).

STAUGHTON LYND

RICHARD KRICKUS *replies:*

It's true that Hammond was established before Gary, that the appropriate date for the Memorial Day Massacre is 1937, and that the people in Lowell did not win their battle with the developers.

Staughton Lynd is mistaken when he implies that in my enthusiasm for CCC I exaggerated its performance.

- The developers in Ross Township did correct a faulty sewer system and I do not know what Lynd means when he refers to a "comprehensive settlement."
- I never said that CCC was the only organization active in the "Coke Oven Action."
- Lynd is mistaken when he implies that the only reason Sedlak organized the community in Hanover Township was to assist the striking teachers. A parallel goal was to exploit interest generated by the strike to involve the community in the equally important matter of quality education. He was successful in this objective.
- My piece was mailed to DISSENT months prior to the fragmentation of CCC and if I'm not mistaken the Winter issue was in the hands of the printer at that time.

The above are all peripheral to Lynd's principal complaint—that I did not mention his name in the piece. The people who took me into their confidence in Lake County made it clear that Staughton Lynd was not interested in publicity and I respected that confidence. It is news to me and other observers of CCC, however, that he was the staff director of the organizers during the period he says he was.

Lynd's claim that the Industrial Areas Foundation and the Catholic Church caved in to red-baiting does not conform with the facts. The red-baiting, which was directed at the IAF organizers and several community leaders, did escalate later when Lynd's involvement in the organizing effort was publicized. But IAF continued to support its organizers and the Catholic Church continued to provide the organizers with the funds they needed to found the Congress. □

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"By chance, I found George McGovern downstairs in the Men's Room..."

"No other political writer chronicled George McGovern's sorrowful reaction to the news that Iowa Senator Harold Hughes had endorsed the candidacy of Edmund Muskie as graphically as [Dr. Hunter S.] Thompson..."

". . . Men's Room, hovering into a urinal and staring straight ahead at the grey marble tiles.

" 'Say . . . ah . . . I hate to mention this,' I said. 'But what about this thing with Hughes?'

"He flinched and quickly zipped his pants up, shaking his head and mumbling something about 'a deal for the vice-presidency.' I could see he didn't want to talk about it."

..."It is precisely that sort of bizarrely irreverent political coverage that has made the 34-year-old Thompson the counter-culture's most listened-to voice during this election campaign."

NEWSWEEK
MAY 1, 1972

Bizarrely Irreverent about Humphrey: "When he ran for President four years ago he was a hack and a fool, but at least he was consistent. Now he talks like an 80-year-old woman who just discovered speed. He will call a press conference to announce that if elected he will 'have all our boys out of Vietnam within 90 days'—then rush across town, weeping and jabbering the whole way, to appear on a network TV show and make a fist-shaking emotional appeal for every good American to stand behind the President and 'applaud' his recent decision to resume heavy bombing in North Vietnam."

...McGovern: "He is probably the most honest big-time politician in America . . . Which is not quite the same thing as being the best candidate for President of the United States. For that, McGovern would need at least one dark kinky streak of Mick Jagger in his soul . . ."

...Muskie: "There was still something weak and malignant in the spine of the Muskie campaign. There was a smell of death about it. He talked like a farmer with terminal cancer trying to borrow money on next year's crop."

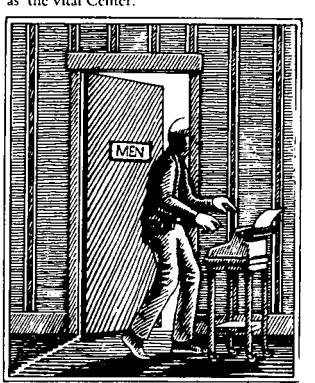
...Nixon: "Getting assigned to cover Nixon in '68 was like being sentenced to six months in a Holiday Inn."

...Wallace: "Anybody who doubts the Wallace appeal should go out and catch his act . . . by the time he was five or six minutes into his spiel I had a sense that the bastard had somehow levitated himself and was hovering over us. It reminded me of a Janis Joplin concert."

"Thompson's is the best stuff on the campaign I've read anywhere. In fact, it's the only stuff on this campaign I can bear to read."

NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN
THE WASHINGTON POST

Good Stuff about Media: "McGovern's solid victory in Wisconsin was dismissed, by most of the press wizards, as further evidence that the Democratic party has been taken over by 'extremists': George McGovern on the Left and George Wallace on the Right, with a sudden dangerous vacuum in what is referred to on editorial pages as 'the vital Center.'



"The root of the problem, of course, is that most of the big-time Opinion Makers decided a long time ago that the candidate of the 'vital Center' in '72 would be none other than that fireball statesman from Maine, Ed Muskie."

...with Heavy Analysis: "If Humphrey loses in California—and he will, I think—his only hope for the nomination will be to make a deal with Wallace, who will come to Miami with something like 350 delegates, and he'll be looking around for somebody to bargain with.

"The logical bargainee, as it were, is Hubert Humphrey, who has been running a sort of left-handed, stupid-coy flirtation with Wallace ever since the Florida primary, where he did everything possible to co-opt Wallace's position on busing without actually agreeing with it."

...and large doses of The Wisdom: "Another Nixon-Humphrey horror would almost certainly cause a 'Fourth Party' uprising and guarantee Nixon's reelection—which might bring the hounds of hell down on a lot of people for the next four very long years.

"But personally I think I'd be inclined to take that risk. Hubert Humphrey is a treacherous, gutless old ward-heeler who should be put in a bottle and sent out with the Japanese Current."

"The best political reporting in the United States has always been at least irreverent. When it approaches the explosively profane idol-busting of the Thompson pieces, it is as close as it ever gets to being an art form."

DICK NOLAN
SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

The only reporter writing from an outfront standpoint of Fear and Loathing: "Another Wednesday morning, another hotel room, another grim bout with the CBS Morning News . . . and another post-mortem press conference scheduled for 10:00 a.m. Three hours from now. Call room service and demand two whole grapefruits, along with a pot of coffee and four glasses of V-8 juice.

"Only a lunatic would do this kind of work: 23 primaries in five months; stone drunk from dawn till dusk and huge speed-blisters all over my head. Where is the meaning? That light at the end of the tunnel?

"But the public expects no less. They want a man who can zap around the nation like a goddamn methedrine bat: Racing from airport to airport, from one crisis to another—sucking up the news and then spewing it out by the 'Five W's' in a package that makes perfect sense.

"Why not? With the truth so dull and depressing, the only working alternative is wild bursts of madness and filigree."

...with an insider's perspective on Objective Journalism: "The only thing I ever saw that came close to Objective Journalism was the closed-circuit TV that watched shoplifting in the General Store at Woody Creek, Colorado."

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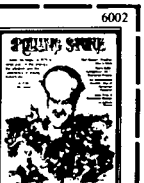

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